

THE DUTCHMAN FROM DRIENE

JENNY ELFERINK BOS

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Gradus Elferink

This narrative is dedicated to my grandchildren whose love has so enriched my life.

Margot

Karla

Shannon

Christopher

Lisa

Dana

John

Heidi

Gretchen

(In order of their age)

J.E.B.

P R E F A C E

Now past my seventieth year, I am more and more aware of the continuity of life through the new generations and the effect of the contribution of the different individuals to the formation of the character and values of each new generation. For that reason, and because my children have asked me at various times to do so, I wish to record here the interesting life of their grandfather, Gradus Elferink, who figured in early Dutch union history. Because of his unique character and personal qualities, he was an especially strong influence, not only on his children, but on the succeeding generation.

Having my father's Dutch quality of thrift and his habit of recording information, I have retained more than the average number of family letters, etc. along with my father's personal files. I have also had available correspondence from relatives in Holland, as well as a copy of the book, Een Halve Eeuw (A Half Century), published in Holland in 1936.

I am grateful for the encouragement, not only of my family, but also of my dear friend, Alice Fazlollah, who, with suggestions and editing help, has enabled me to bring this narrative to a completion.

J.E.B.

August 1975

THE DUTCHMAN FROM DRIENE

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GRADUS ELFERINK

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

This brief biography is adapted from Een Halve Eeuw (A Half Century), 1886-1936, written by G. Van den Houven in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Metalworkers Union.

Gradus Elferink was born on June 12, 1873, in Driene* (later Hengelo) in the province of Overijssel. After finishing elementary school, he became an apprentice in the firm of Stork Brothers & Company, Hengelo, and was trained as a lathe operator. At nineteen years of age, he was drafted for required military service and he rose to the rank of sergeant, which in those days was most unusual. During his military service, he became acquainted with the Socialist movement, and with Domela Nieuwenhuis, one of its leaders. Upon his return to Hengelo, he was closely associated with Bennink, the Socialist, who had a good reputation in Hengelo and played a significant role in the district.

Bennink so completely impressed the young man that Elferink followed in his footsteps in almost every respect. After a rift in the Socialist Party, Bennink could not or would not align himself with either faction and Elferink took the middle course.

Soon after his return to Hengelo, a minor incident led to Elferink's dismissal from Stork Brothers. The Queen, on her way to Enschede, stopped at Hengelo, where a welcoming ceremony was held at the station. The antiroyalist Socialists interrupted the ceremony by whistling to show their disrespect. (One of them was Peter Bos, later the author's father-in-law.) Elferink had not been involved, but later was seen talking with Bennink. This was reported to the management of Stork and Elferink was discharged.

He worked for a time in Germany, then moved to Haarlem where he obtained employment at a branch of Stork Brothers. He had a good reputation there, and was even a member of the management-workers committee, but was nevertheless laid off after speaking at a union meeting in Leiden. However, in 1903, first on a temporary basis, and later permanently, he was appointed the first paid official of the Metalworkers Union.

*(Dre nă)

After his resignation in 1906, he was employed by DeQlerk in Bloemendaal, near Haarlem, but this working environment did not appeal to him. Roelofs, for some time presiding officer of the union, emigrated to the United States in 1903. He and Elferink corresponded, and probably on that account Elferink decided to emigrate, too. In the spring of 1907, he left Holland to make his permanent home in the United States.

Chapter I

GENEALOGY

Jan Hendrik Elferink
Boekelo (Lonneker) Netherlands
B. June 20, 1841
D. April 12, 1888

Jenneken Snuverink
Boekelo, Netherlands
B. September 5, 1843
D. June 1, 1925

m. February 13, 1868

Dieka Johanna
B. November 6, 1869
D. April 20, 1951

Gradus (George) Elferink
Groot Driene
Boekelo, Netherlands
B. June 12, 1873
D. October 16, 1955

Jan
B. February 26, 1880
D. January 27, 1958

Jan Hendrik
B. September 30, 1886
D. July 4, 1964

CHAPTER I

The Dutchman Remembers*

I, Gradus Elferink, was born on June 12, 1873 in Driene, in the Province of Overijssel, which later became Hengelo.

One of the first things I remember is my mother pulling me in a wooden cart, made by Father, to go to their land for weeding and cultivating.

I remember going to school with my sister, Hanna, who was four years older, taking me by the hand. There were two classes, the Big Class and the Small Class. The teacher was a Jew, which was very rare indeed, not because of discrimination but because Jews in the surrounding cities and villages were usually the small business people. This teacher spoke to us in the Twentsch dialect spoken in Driene and used it to teach us correct Dutch. When we left that first day, he said in dialect that the next day he would teach us more new words. I don't remember how long he spoke to us in our dialect before we were familiar with the correct Dutch. He was a fairly good singer and began each day with catchy songs, which, of course, appealed to us.

I don't remember when I moved on to the Big Class. There was another teacher and he played with us with popguns and insisted that we not crowd our letters when writing. After that, another teacher came from Delft. He taught us many things, particularly history, and I especially remember learning of the cholera plague, when one hundred four people died in the City of Delft. I was just about twelve when the next teacher came. This teacher praised me because I knew a "little bit" about Dutch history.

The textile industry was growing and children at the age of twelve had to pass an examination in order to be permitted to work in the factories. The teacher asked my mother if she would permit me to take an examination in Enschede, a neighboring city, an hour and a half's walk from my home. I passed the test and my teacher used me as an example to spur other children on to do their best. Then I had to take a special test at the textile factory in Hengelo to which I applied. I was accepted.

* This section was written by the author's father in 1948 at her request.

Then came the great change in my life. Again I went with sister Hanna, this time to the textile mill. I still can hear the boss saying, "Now your miserable life begins." After nearly two and a half years, this boss fired me for misbehavior (probably inciting others to insist on better conditions.) About four months after that I found a job in a woodworking shop—mostly polishing. I still was wearing klompen, wooden shoes, because Mother had said, "Do not be a show-off," meaning that I should not wear leather shoes. I had received my first pair of leather shoes at age nine.

There was a school connected with one of the machine shops and pupils from other factories were allowed to attend. The woodworking shop, where I was employed, was among these and so I attended school about five hours a week. The teacher was an outstanding person. He had been chosen by the machine shop owners from a group of city teachers. I remember dozens of stories he told and subjects he spoke about, and so obtained a little more schooling than I had from the elementary school. He had a gift for making subjects interesting and usually started the lessons with a ten-minute talk about happenings of the day and the latest news. He was particularly interested in skating and told us of an American skater, Donoghue (which he pronounced Donog), who became a champion at eighteen, if I remember correctly.

I became acquainted with a variety of people at the machine shop. It was about 1890, at age seventeen, when I heard some of the men talking about the Socialists. As a boy, my father, along with other weavers, had taken me to an open air meeting in a great meadow. The police were there in full force. The Socialists later collected pennies and dimes and built their own meeting place in Hengelo so they could hold indoor meetings, since no one allowed us to use their buildings. The Salvation Army also could not meet elsewhere, so we offered our place to them. This was done because we believed in free speech.

This tolerance for freedom of expression had a very deep influence on my thinking. To add to it, the Protestant churches did nothing but condemn those new "nitwit revolutionaries, who were not dry behind the ears." With my reading and listening to speeches, and feeling the heavy yoke of capitalistic oppression, one can understand why I soon stopped going to the Bible class.



Gradus as Sergeant

Meanwhile the time had arrived for me to join the military forces, on March 9, 1893, a date I have never forgotten. A new life began, and my youthful energy and enthusiasm led me to enjoy and make the most of the military life. Since my education lacked a lot, I studied hard and succeeded. I became a corporal, and later a sergeant.

I stayed four months longer than was necessary, substituting for a soldier who was needed at home. For this I received seventy-five guilders. I sent the money to my widowed mother by a soldier who was returning home. My military service was over July 14, 1894 but I came home on June 14, receiving a month's vacation with pay.

I went back to the machine shop at Stork Brothers & Company, but was discharged in September, 1895. Queen Wilhelmina, on one of her many tours, made a stop in Hengelo. During her visit the Socialists, who were opposed to the idea of royalty, had organized quietly to show disrespect and opposition by blowing whistles. While I personally did not do that, my employer knew I belonged to the group and, at the first opportunity, after I had been seen speaking to Bennink, a leading Socialist, I was discharged.

I left my home town for Amsterdam, and there I became thoroughly involved in the Socialist youth movement. However, I never could understand the custom of signing, "Yours for the Revolution." I interpreted it to mean what it means now, the overthrow of the government, and my views were for slower changes through representative government. I simply signed my letters dealing with the movement with "Greetings."

In March, 1897, I left Amsterdam for Saarbruecken in Germany. Another chapter in my life began. I visited the tower of the world-renowned Strassburg church and still have pictures of it. I attended a song festival in nearby Bavaria, where there was singing, music and beer, all very orderly.

The following Sunday was May 1. I watched the May Day parade of out-of-towners and a few independent building-trade workers. A red (Socialist) flag fluttered high on a new church tower that was being built. There was trouble getting it down. The police tried to shoot it down. How it finally was accomplished, I don't know, but, of course, the blame was placed on workers from out of town. The newspapers fumed; but many workers just grinned.

I found men with socialistic sympathies in the machine shop. I was learning German fast, since it was somewhat like my own dialect. I was impressed by the well-regulated set-up of the work, the well-trained men, the order and cleanliness. The men took me with them on their Sunday walks, cane in hand, into the outskirts and woods. Official gatherings were always very patriotic. Though they worked hard, they knew how to enjoy themselves. They were somewhat surprised because I could not join in the music, and especially in the singing. They invited me to join their Nickelverein (Nickel Club, a social organization), which met once a month, in spite of the fact that I was a teetotaler. At the first meeting, they made me dance with the hired maid. It was fun. During inventory, I traveled with a group of men to Strassburg and the Kaiser's palace.

On July 18, 1897, I left for Holland for a month's army manoeuvres. Then I returned to Amsterdam and got to know the light-hearted, good-hearted Amsterdamers. There I joined the Metalworkers Union and took an active part in it.

In 1898, I moved to Haarlem for no particular reason -- wanderlust, I suppose. I found the people there very different from those in Amsterdam, much more conservative.

In 1899, I married my boyhood sweetheart, Grada Berendina Elbert, who had waited faithfully for me to settle down. Our son, John Henry Gerhardt, and daughter, Jenneken Grada Johanna, were born there. Active in the machinist local, I was sent out to speak at clubs, and take part in debates at political meetings. I was discharged from the Werf Conrad, a branch of Stork Brothers & Company in Hengelo, because of a speech I made in Gouda. Then I became the paid president of the National Metalworkers Union.

The Executive Committee of the machinist's union sent me to Ghent and Brussels in Belgium to study the union there. It was a wholesome experience for me, especially meeting those friendly Flemish. I was amazed at their organization and the outstanding cooperative movement, with its own dry goods stores and drugstores. I liked the immense Flemish bakeries with their excellent bread that was delivered by dogcart. The bakeries paid higher wages than anywhere else and had an eight-hour day.

I attended the Belgian Socialist Party Convention in Ghent, and spent a few days in Brussels, where I met Emile van der Velde, one of the leaders of the Belgian Socialist Party. A visit to the Parliament was doubly interesting, because Belgium too was a royal democracy. From then until my departure for America, I kept in touch with Ghent by letter. Some time later I had the pleasure of having the representative from Ghent in my home. I asked him to speak in Haarlem and in Amsterdam.

Later, I had to organize the international union meeting in Amsterdam. There I met about eight English delegates, one Scandinavian who came in high hat and conversed with me in German, and, I believe, five from Germany. It was interesting to hear one fiery German speak and I remember so well the English exclaiming, "hear, hear!" -- an expression new to the Dutch delegates. The English represented trade unionism, pure and simple; the Germans spoke of class struggle. My short opening speech was translated into German, English, and French. At the end of the convention, the English sang as they moved about the hall. A young Frenchman sang the "International" in which the Germans, Belgians and Dutch participated. After the meeting, the delegates flocked to the saloons and drank in favor of the new evangelism.

There was great consternation in 1903. A general strike took place and Holland was industrially crippled, especially the railroads. The Calvinistic Cabinet, under the leadership of Dr. A. Kuiper, prepared and adopted a law to break the strike, which the radical world called the muzzle-law, referring to the verse in Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." In April, the workers struck again, but the government was ready and the strike was broken. Thousands lost their jobs, including pensions. This led to bitter fighting in the workers' ranks, mostly because the Socialist Democrats agitated for better laws, health conditions, etc. As an idealist, I did not expect better laws from the representatives of the capitalistic class.

By this time, I had been chosen secretary of the Metalworkers Union and editor of their paper. It was a most difficult job to face in the trade union. On account of the debacle of the last strike, bitterness continued to grow. The paid organizers, like myself, were accused of being climbers, dishonest, and looking for easy jobs.

There was an anti-lawmaking group and a very conservative group. I had to deal with both factions and in the end I was caught between them. I was called "neither fish nor fowl," "half and half," and "maverick," so in the end I had to quit. The man who took my position was not blessed with any appreciation of my problems. He described me as stupid and mean. (Later he was discharged for dishonesty.) The gentleman who took over the editing of the union paper was worse, but in a refined way. I sent him a letter of defense, which he printed with a line or two of sarcastic comments. This man, in his better years, prattled about humanity and changed from an anti-Social Democrat to a feverish apostle of that party.

In 1907, I decided to move to the United States. I remember so well the feeling that came over me, walking with my wife and two children in Rotterdam for the last time, and all my belongings in boxes on the ship. We arrived on the day before Decoration Day and saw the first of the New World—Hoboken, New Jersey. We boarded the Lehigh Valley night train and arrived in Rochester and were met by an old friend.

So, a new life began.

Chapter II

GENEALOGY

Jan Hendrik Elferink
Boekelo (Lonneker) Netherlands
B. June 20, 1841
D. April 12, 1888

Jenneken Sruverink
Boekelo, Netherlands
B. September 5, 1843
D. June 1, 1925

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Dieka Johanna
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B. June 12, 1873
D. October 16, 1955

Jan
B. February 26, 1880
D. January 27, 1958

Jan Hendrik
B. September 30, 1886
D. July 4, 1964

CHAPTER II

The Dutchman's Brother Remembers*

Dear Jenny,

I shall now tell you some facts I know about the Elferink family name, my parents, and your father in particular.

You must have a copy of the changes in our family name! (Listed below.) We are all grateful for the research your father did when he was in Holland in 1932.

1380	Elverkinc
--	Elverkynec
1499	Elverkyng
1543	Elferkynck
1567	Elferdinck
1601	Elfertinck
1733	Elferink

Just for the record, Gradus' paternal grandfather, Gradus Elferink, born in Enschede in 1812, married Dika Overdyk of Zwolle, born that same year. I also know that Jan Snuverink, born in 1791 in Enschede, was your father's maternal grandfather.

Your grandparents, Jan Hendrik Elferink and Jennenken Snuverink, were married on February 13, 1868, and lived in rooms in Bloemendal, Overijssel, for two years, then built their own home in 1870. This house burned down, however, about 1874, for my mother told me she rescued your father, Gradus, through a small window. Sister Hanna was old enough to get out by herself. This happened before Jan and I were born. I am the last of seven children. Two sisters and a brother died before they were two years of age. Your grandfather came to Driene from 't Stroot and therefore became known as Stroot Jan Heenik. Later, he took on yet another name because he served strong

* Copy of a letter from Hendrik Elferink, brother of Gradus, written at my request. Translated from the Dutch by the author.



Mother of Gradus and Hendrik

drink, including kummel and liquor from Germany. He provided liquor for many weddings in Twente and its surroundings. He smuggled this liquor over the German border by walking, mind you. Sometimes he was gone weeks at a time and your grandmother was home alone with Hanna, Gradus, Jan, and me.

So, on one occasion he came home to find the house burned down. Your grandmother said, "Jan Heenik, what now?" Whereupon he answered, "Jenke, door komp wa wier wat op." (Jenneken, something will be built there again.) He left for Germany again and returned two weeks later with a wagon full of stones, pulled by horses. Then he built the house, which you saw in 1931. Changes were made in 1904, 1920, and 1946. Your cousin, Henk, helped with the last major change.

The rebuilt 1874 model, I was told, had a milk room as well as a room where your grandparents wove cloth on rented looms during the winter when they couldn't work on the land. At that time, they had a separate stall for the goats and cows. The beds were built in cupboards with curtains to hide the beds in the daytime and for warmth at night. In 1904, bedrooms were built and eventually we had a stable for our horse. Still later a barn was built.

Now about your father. As a child, I heard many conversations, and have remembered them, as well as some of the things that happened. My Father died at the age of forty-six. I was only eighteen months old and never knew him. Mother had only a small income, and we lived near the edge of poverty. Sister Hanna and brother Gradus brought their small pay home faithfully and Mother struggled on the land with spade and fork to grow potatoes, rye, and hay for the cow. For the winter, she fattened a couple of pigs in order to increase her small income somewhat. Indeed, how she was able to provide for food and other things is almost unbelievable. Gradus was a happy young man who could learn and work well. The schoolmaster was full of praise for him. In his free time, he read a great deal and, naturally, he could understand it and explain it well. Saturday evenings in the summer, he often went along the Driener Creek to fish and came home with a few fish -- generally pickerel and sometimes eel. In the morning, when he was washing, he sang at the top of his voice. He could also recite poetry for the amusement and pleasure of his friends.

Seventy years ago, things were a great deal different from now. All one saw was people working on the land. Sundays there was church, but very little else to do. One Sunday morning, Gradus stood near the well and it appeared that he was involved in a busy conversation with someone about the fine weather and the fruit and vegetables that were growing on the land. Mother and sister Hanna pricked up their ears and wondered who he was talking to. It turned out he was talking to an imaginary audience.

When he was nineteen years old, he had to draw a number to determine whether he would be drafted for military service. He was drafted. It was a disappointment to Mother because she would have less money coming in. On a cold March morning, he left for Zwolle and from there to Nijmegen, and was assigned to the infantry. In a few months he was transferred to Amersfoort. He wrote regularly, and my sister and Gradus had good handwriting and (in our opinion) made few mistakes. It seemed to us that much time passed and he still hadn't been home on leave. What was the reason? Before he came home he wanted to be a corporal and, yes, finally he came home in his blue uniform with yellow stripes on the trousers, and a couple of yellow stripes on the cuff of his short coat. His plan was to advance himself more, and he wanted to be a sergeant—and he was successful. He was admired by his friends and acquaintances. What a smart-looking sergeant, and what an intelligent man! His former employer, Stork,* admired him and took him to the factory, and showed him as an example to all the young men. This they should do, too, for their own improvement and for the honor of the firm.

One must think of what the circumstances were at that time. Out of one hundred soldiers, there were generally not more than four or five who became sergeants. On one particular day, Mother received a letter from Gradus' commanding officer with a request to approve his going to the Dutch East Indies in the Colonial Army to fight against the natives. Mother refused to give permission, and it was probably a good thing because many of his colleagues were wounded or died of malaria.

* Stork Brothers & Company, founded in 1868, is still one of the leading engineering firms in Holland.

After his service was completed, he came back to work at Stork. There was, in those days, a certain amount of dissatisfaction among the working people. They were rebellious. The contrast between the manufacturers and workers was great. Manufacturers became richer, bought land in the surrounding country, and houses not only in Hengelo, but in Enschede and Almelo, and spread in all directions. They became mightier and richer than the greatest landowners and noble owners of castles. The workers were only partly united, and were weak and ignorant. A defrocked minister, Domela Nieuwenhuis, preached the evangelism of rebellion for justice and welfare for everyone. The spirit of the time affected Gradus and he was a faithful follower of the new creed. This creed was for him and many of his friends the ideal that brought light to the darkness in which they were living. Yes, they believed that the light would soon come.

The followers of Nieuwenhuis were on a blacklist which meant persecution and discharge. I will give you an example that took place in Hengelo. In 1897, the Queen was going to make a visit to Enschede and on her journey the train was to stop in Hengelo. As was the custom, a crowd of people were going to the railroad station to see the train, and maybe also the Queen. The Nieuwenhuis followers were against royalty and wanted to show this that morning by blowing whistles. To blow a whistle meant scorn and abhorrence. The evening before, your father came home with such a whistle, to the great annoyance of our mother. It was quite a scene. I never forgot it; there were many harsh words. Your father gave in out of love for his mother and did not go.

The factories were closed and the people had a day off. The police had been tipped off. There were many victims and they were later discharged. One of them was Peter Bos, your father-in-law, Jenny. Shortly after that, your father was also discharged because he failed to greet one of the directors of the factory, I think. After that, he worked a while in Amsterdam and then in Germany. Then he came back to Holland and went to work in Haarlem. Even there he lost his job because of his inflammatory language. Shortly thereafter, he was asked to be the first organizer of a machinist union in our country. He served from 1903 to 1906 as secretary of the Union and editor of their paper De Metalbewerker (The Metalworker). Because of a great deal of difference in opinions between him and the union, he finally resigned. He was neither radical nor conservative.

After having worked for a short time for a fine employer in Bloemendaal, he left for the U.S.A. There he had further disappointments and reversals. This is quite a stirring life for a farmer's son from Driene.

In 1932, when he was in Holland, we had many pleasant reminiscences. From experience we had become wiser. We talked about unforgettable times. He had, and still has, our highest admiration for his daring and undertaking—not in business, No! our brother was an idealist and humanist who believed in the goodness of people. So be it.

Your cousin Jenny and I have done our best. Greetings to all your boys and your brother Henry and Wini.

Oom Hendrik (Uncle Henry)

Hengelo, March 1963

CHAPTER III

The Dutchman is Remembered in Dutch Union History

The following was translated and abstracted by Jan Van der Vate from Een Halve Eeuw, 1886-1936, written by G. Van den Houven in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Metalworkers Union. It provides the background for understanding Gradus Elferink's activities in the early Dutch union movement.

In 1886, a local Iron and Metalworkers Union was organized in Amsterdam, followed by similar groups in other cities. These unions formed a loose federation, which held an annual congress and published a monthly paper, The Metalbewerker (The Metalworker). The Metalworkers Union was associated with the National Arbeids-Secretariat (NAS),* a strong leftist federation of labor organizations.

The union movement at all levels was torn by dissension. The leading issue was whether they should limit themselves to the immediate reduction of the work week (to not more than sixty hours) and increasing their pay (above the starvation level of ten to twelve guilders a week), or whether they should involve themselves in political action by taking positions for or against legislation that might affect them.

This question came up at the 1901 congress in Haarlem. One of the two locals from Amsterdam proposed that the National Union decide: "In no event to participate in agitation for or against social legislation." A motion to that effect was carried 173 to 110, with 35 abstentions. This put the national Metalworkers Union on record that it would not agitate for the passage of social legislation, such as child-labor laws, wage and hour laws, school attendance laws, or public health and housing legislation for the good of the whole country. The Metalworkers Union wanted to move faster and more directly with their own union. On second thought, however, a referendum held in June 1902, reversed the previous action. The Amsterdam local did not accept this reversal as final, and, at the 1902 National Congress, moved that: (1) "The union try as much as possible to keep trade unionism out of politics, and (2) "Raise its voice against agitating in favor of good or against bad social legislation." The motion was lost 15 to 8 with 3 abstentions.

* National Labor Secretariat

Gradus Elferink, then presiding officer of the national Metalworkers Union, had previously stated that he was willing to accept the first part of the motion, but not the second.

During 1902, the labor movement continued to grow, but early in 1903 a number of uncoordinated "wildcat" local strikes broke out, and the question of supporting the strikes arose. When finally a number of metalworkers locals also went out on strike, the National Union had to decide whether or not it should support strike action in its own ranks. The conclusion was that it must advise against striking. The general strike, called for April 8, was not popular with the general public and the unions were too weak, financially and otherwise, to carry it through, so that the strike turned out to be a total failure.

The decision was catastrophic for the Metalworkers Union. The situation made it necessary to call a conference, at which twenty-one locals were represented.

The first item on the agenda was a proposal by the national officers to continue to have a paid secretary. This position had been authorized by the Congress of 1902, and the election had taken place in May, 1903. The successful candidate, elected by 1,316 of the 1,651 votes cast, was Mr. Elferink, who, since the beginning of 1903, had already been acting as paid president of the National Union. His salary was set at fifteen guilders per week, later increased to sixteen.

The year 1903 had been eventful for the union, as well as for the entire trade union movement. In his annual report the secretary laments: "The Union grows in membership, which indicates renewed zest for life, and gives hope for the future, but there is a dark spot, which continues to grow, and erodes, as it were, like a cancer. A sickness barely noticeable, but, which, since April, has revealed itself in its full, dangerous nature. This is the internal struggle. The mutual trust has been disrupted; the various opinions oppose each other increasingly sharply; behind each disagreement evil intent is suspected. The discord continues to grow, and this is the more dangerous since we stand so much in need of each other. The coming Congress will bear witness to this and we are, therefore, anticipating it with apprehension."

It is the true Elferink speaking here, the man who preeminently attempted to keep the peace and to hold together what, in the long run, could not be held together. It was not differences of opinion that threatened the Union, so much as the fact that the radical minority was preventing the Union from taking the only course that would ensure its future growth. Those who, however well-intentioned, wanted to keep everything and everyone together—radical and conservative alike—were actually an obstruction to the choice of a new course.

According to Elferink's report on the Congress of 1904, in The Metalworker, the course of events at the Congress was relatively smooth, and the clashes were not as serious as he had anticipated. Reading it now, we must admit that Elferink's judgment was overly subjective.

Although the 1904 Congress, held in Haarlem, was peaceful on the surface, there was still considerable division, reflecting various trends or philosophies. J. van Blanken, editor of The Metalworker since January 1, was attacked by the radical followers of Domela Nieuwenhuis.* Elferink, a middle-of-the-roader, was also very critical. Van Blanken did not compromise, but propagated frankly and freely what have become the modern principles and methods of trade-unionism—participation in social action.

In the summer of 1904, the NAS issued a division circular urging members of unions not affiliated with them to resign their present memberships and join NAS. Secretary Elferink and several other union officials had been offended by this circular because it had been circulated secretly. Even some members of the NAS had been displeased. The officers of the Metalworkers Union attempted to make an issue of it, which only served to widen the breach between radicals and conservatives and bring the officers of the Union, especially Secretary Elferink, under reproach.

* Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis (1846-1919) was a defrocked Lutheran minister turned anarchist, who had been the leader of the old Socialist movement and a member of Parliament, 1888-1891.

The 1905 Congress, held in Amsterdam, provided a fertile field for the opponents of NAS. A proposal to leave the radical NAS was defended by Elferink, on good and justifiable grounds. A motion to that effect was adopted by 12 to 8, and subsequently confirmed by membership referendum: 314 in favor, 207 opposed, and 19 abstaining.

The die had been cast, and the Metalworkers Union had freed itself from a progressively deteriorating federation, but three leftist locals, with about 140 members, left the Union as a result.

The Congress also adopted a motion, 228 to 180, to establish an unemployment fund, from which five cents (quite a large amount at that time) per week per member was to be paid. Elferink was elected editor of The Metalworker.

The 1906 Congress met in Haarlem. After twenty years of union activity, it represented 21 locals with 800 members. The leftist groups were no longer present to sow discord, so the atmosphere had cleared.

Point one on the agenda was a proposal that The Metalworker be made a weekly publication. This provoked considerable discussion. Elferink defended the proposal, pointing out that people no longer attended meetings as much as they had, and a weekly would keep these members informed. The motion was adopted, 14 to 4, and Elferink continued as editor.

A centralized, progressive, membership-dues arrangement was adopted. Under this arrangement, dues were paid directly to the national union, with 35 percent being returned to the locals. (When locals collected the dues, in some cases none ever reached the national.) This was the beginning of centralization.

The main item on the agenda was a proposal to join the newly organized Nederlandsche Bond van Vakvereenigingen (NVV),* organized on January 1, 1906, with 17,000 members. The national officers of the union were generally opposed to this proposal. Elferink was their spokesman in voicing opposition. His main objection seems not to have been a matter of principle, but his disapproval of NVV's action in an incident that took place before it was formally organized.

* Netherlands Association of Trade-Unions.

What had the NVV done? In October, 1905, a group of pile drivers in Amsterdam went on strike which meant that many workers in the building trades dependent on the pile drivers would be unemployed during the winter. The NVV was at this point only a provisional slate of officers. But the Amsterdam piledrivers' strike was obviously intended to cause problems even before it came into being. This was a typical radical tactic and one they would continue to employ for many more years.

When the pile drivers asked for support, the NVV squarely opposed the request. For those days, it was a courageous decision, but the whole purpose of the NVV was to wean labor away from the disastrous policy of wildcat strikes that the radical NAS had fostered and supported. This apparent abandoning of fellow unionists earned the disapproval of Elferink and the other leaders of the Metalworkers Union.

One might have expected a more realistic position by someone who had as good a mind as Elferink. He should have understood that this unpleasant road just had to be traveled. But he did what a union leader is never permitted to do: He let his emotions rule his head.

He did raise other objections: fear of losing members, fear of making enemies of the radicals, and the cost, for a union that was just beginning to break even. Doubtless, Elferink was aware that these were not eighteen-carat arguments, but he dragged them in anyway.

After thirty years we can write about this controversy objectively and freely without any personal prejudice. In many respects, Elferink was an excellent worker, a man with a clear vision. But, in 1906, he was on the wrong road, and he should have realized that his "No" against the NAS implied in consequence a "Yes" for the NVV. The proposal failed 11 to 6, with 2 abstentions. However, in the referendum the membership voted to join the NVV, with 311 votes in favor, 175 against, and 65 abstentions. The referendum also decided to move the national office from Haarlem to Amsterdam.

In the issue of The Metalworker for June 23, 1906, which reported the referendum, Elferink wrote:

Because of the result of the referendum I have decided to resign my position. I am extremely sorry that it has turned out this way, but with reference to ... NVV, and moving to Amsterdam, the majority may well be right. If I should be mistaken I shall be glad to admit my error. It has been intimated lately that I have cleverly taken the opportunity to agitate against the NVV. This is definitely not true. I have, however, my opinion about the NVV, and have expressed it on suitable occasions, and could have said much more ...

The majority has spoken, and must therefore assume the responsibility if our organization takes the wrong road. I advise our allies to keep calm and to remain in the Union. I, too, hope to stay there, if I should be successful in finding work. [Having been a union organizer, the possibility of a firm employing him was very small.]

The best will be that Amsterdam settle down to work and show what it can do. Up until now it has been in the opposition. Well, then, my experience has been to put the opponents in office, and they will generally do the same things they oh-so-pointedly disapproved in others.

We shall thus quietly have to wait to see what Amsterdam produces.

Elferink

In his farewell address, Elferink had applauded the action of a group of moulders in Nijmegen. The moulders had been working in the foundry of the Nijmegen Trolley Company. Early in April, they had gone on strike because of a dispute over an unsatisfactory casting. The management demanded that the persons involved do the work over again without pay, and threatened them with dismissal if they refused. The management accused the workers of extreme carelessness. The result was that all the moulders went on strike immediately. Most of them were non-union, although at one time they had belonged to the Metalworkers Union. When they began their strike, they appealed

to the union, and the Haarlem officers were forthwith ready to support their cause. Elferink, as Union Secretary, concerned himself with the dispute. The officers of the Nijmegen local refused to support the strike, since it was direct action by non-union personnel, and, for the same reason, the Amsterdam local had refused to collect funds to support the strikers.

Here lay the wide gulf between Elferink and the advocates of the new trade-unionism, who believed that the interests of the organization and the struggle of the working classes were not served by becoming officially involved in the thoughtless actions of irresponsible, unorganized individuals. Elferink, gentle as he was, saw people in need, and it is clear that he believed he was serving, rather than damaging, the organization.

The referendum had voted to join the NVV and to move the national office from Haarlem to Amsterdam. The latter of these two actions probably tipped the balance in Elferink's decision to resign.

Regardless of how one may judge Elferink's actions, he accepted the consequences of his stand. He was honest and upright. On June 21, 1906, he informed the local in Amsterdam, which had to organize the new staff, that he was leaving, but that he would stay on until July 1 in order to wind up outstanding business.

* * *

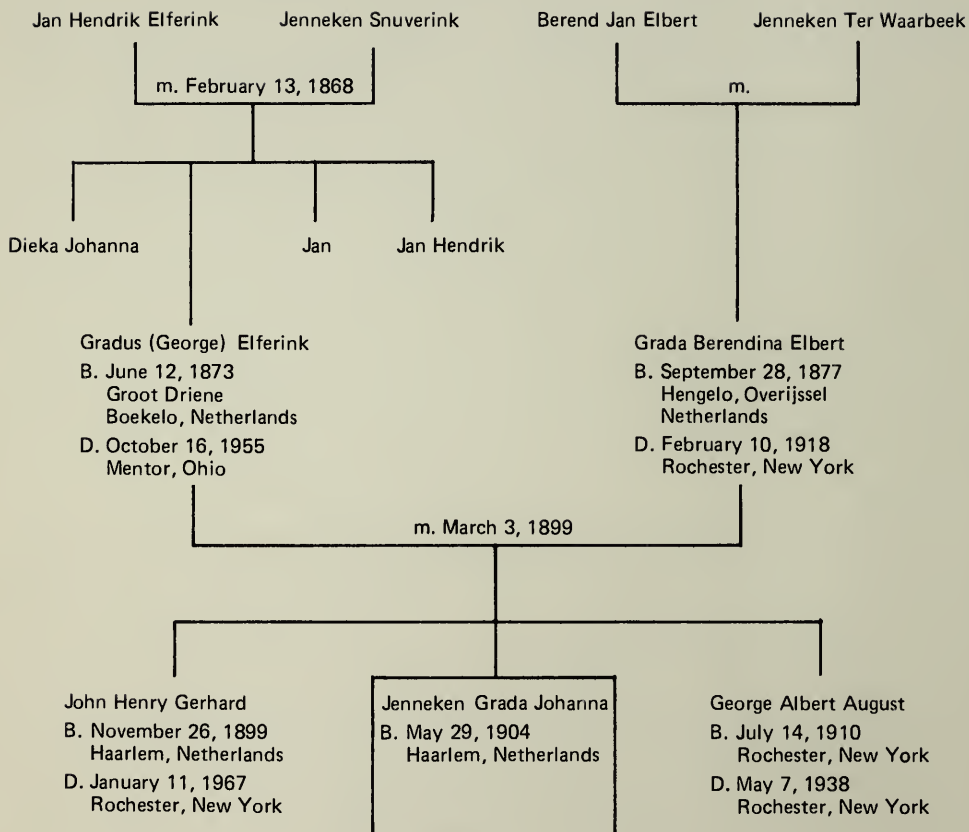
The first news from him since he emigrated to the United States in 1907 reached us in 1927, when Elferink wrote us with reference to the contents of the jubilee issue of The Metalworker, published on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Union. We discovered then that Elferink had remained a faithful reader of our publication, which had been sent to him by friends. Since then, we corresponded occasionally and have even received contributions to the The Metalworker from him.

Elferink in 1927 acknowledged that he considered the newer foundations of the trade union movement to be the right ones, and in 1932, when he spent a few months in the country of his birth, he reiterated this point of view in personal conversations. He returned to the United States and will probably never see Holland again, for he is now past sixty, and his children live there.

His picture, included in this book (Een Halve Eeuw), was sent to us upon our request. We think it deserves a place because, in spite of his shortcomings during extremely difficult times (and we must certainly not lose sight of that), Elferink gave some of the good years of his life to serve the union and the working classes. He labored hard and unselfishly, and for that we owe him thanks.

Chapter IV

GENEALOGY



CHAPTER IV

The Dutchman's Daughter Remembers

My father, mother, brother and I arrived in the United States from the Netherlands on my third birthday, May 29, 1907. We had left Haarlem, the flower city of the Netherlands, to settle in Rochester, New York, also a flower city,* which at that time had a Dutch population of about four thousand. It had been a rough voyage. I was practically the only person who was not seasick and so had the privilege of being promenaded by the Captain.

For two weeks, I was told, we stayed with friends, the Roelofs family, with whom my father had corresponded. We moved several times, in one instance without even unpacking because my father was immediately bitten by a bedbug. I do remember a house on Sullivan Street with the privy in the back-yard. On one occasion, as Father was sitting in that outside structure, a few floorboards cracked and he called for help. My mother and brother helped him from the sitting position to his feet, on the two by fours upon which the building stood, so that he did not go through the painfully embarrassing experience of falling in. Needless to say, the landlord was forced to do some repair work. I remember the two-seat swing whose rhythm I loved. I would sing the first English song I learned, "Come In and Out the Windows," and when I wouldn't stop the swing on my playmate's command, she bit my wrist. I bore the teeth marks for a long time.

My father, a machinist, was fortunate in being able to receive instructions from a German co-worker, Fritz Kirsch, through the German language. Having lived near the German border, he had learned some German and, as a youth, he had also worked in Germany. It was at this time that Father became "George." The foreman, unfamiliar with "Gradus," impatiently wrote "George" on his work application. Later (in 1918), when Father became a United States citizen, he made the name legal.

* Rochester, with its abundant waterpower, was once a prosperous flour milling city and was called the "flour" city. Flour millers moved to Minnesota in the 1880's and the city turned to nursery enterprises to become the "flower" city.

Our first Christmas Eve in the United States was spent at the Kirsch home, where we went after attending a church pageant in which the Kirsch children took part. My brother always remembered the food, especially the butter pats with designs. My father remembered Mrs. Kirsch's reply: "Mit Stock und Geduld (With a switch and patience)" when he commented on the abilities of the three children, one of whom played the piano beautifully.

I remember the house we rented on Atlantic Avenue ("Lanticavenoo" we children pronounced it), which stood some three hundred feet from the street. We had a cistern for rain water besides the drinking-water well on which my father built a pulley with a rope so we could draw the water more easily. There was the outhouse with a calendar and wall paper and a Larkin Catalog. It had an open vent, through which my brother threw apples, particularly when it was occupied by me or someone else he wanted to tease.

Near the back door was the slanted trap door leading to the root cellar and coal bin—the only part under the house that had been excavated. The bin was filled by running a chute from the coal truck through a window to the bin. Close by was the covered cistern, filled from the roof eaves troughs.

The back door led to the woodshed with reinforced flooring and inner walls. This room, as near as I can remember, had a bench with pails of water, ready for Mother to use, and one pail with a dipper from which we could take a drink. There was an iron sink where we could dump water, but there was no pump. Above the sink was a shelf with a collection of spare lamp bases and chimneys. My brother filled the oil lamps with kerosene while Mother cleaned the smoky chimneys. (We had several pretty lamps throughout the house. There was a copper one, and one of china, as well as shades for them—one of the shades was a china globe and one, which may have been a Tiffany, had a pyramid shade with four flat sides.) Tools and tubs were hung on one wall.

There was a table with two round gray-and-white enamel "petroleum" stoves that had been brought from Holland. One stove was large enough to hold a soup kettle or large frying pan; the other was large enough for a small tea kettle or coffee pot. These were used mostly in the summertime. Most of the cooking was done on the Franklin in the main part of the house.

Two steps up from the woodshed was the kitchen-dining room, actually the family room. Immediately to the right was a bedroom and stairway leading to two unheated bedrooms. To the left was the pantry with its oilcloth-covered shelves and pots, pans, crocks and imitation Meissen dishes, a wedding present. There was plenty of storage space for beets, carrots, potatoes, and onions for immediate consumption, although most of the produce we had raised or purchased was kept in the root cellar.

Going farther left was the huge wood-and-coal Franklin stove with a warm water reservoir on the side and a closed shelf above, where the flat irons with detachable handles and trivets were stored. Not until I was older did I learn how to polish the black stove with the nickel trimmings. I can still smell the fragrance of the coarse graham yeast bread that came from that oven.

I can't remember an icebox. At the farther end of the family room, near the windows, was a large, oval, oak kitchen table, with extra leaves, and some sturdy oak kitchen chairs. There was a White treadle sewing machine and a huge oak chest of drawers. Probably the most beautiful and most meaningful piece of furniture was the walnut bookshelves, mounted on spindles. Father had brought it from Holland along with his many Dutch books and encyclopedia. (After his death I gave Father's books to the Cleveland Public Library for one of its foreign language corners.) The front door was in this room and led to a small porch, which we never used.

Two steps down was the living room with its large oak library table, large wooden rockers—one with a leather seat—a two-seated over-stuffed sofa, footstool, a huge bookcase, a gold-tan rug not large enough for the room, and a pot-bellied stove during the winter. The stove was taken down for the summer and the stove-pipe hole in the chimney was covered by an ornamental circle of tin.

During the winters, we lived in the center room. There we ate, we played, my parents and brother read, and my brother Henk did his homework. On Saturdays we bathed in the wash tub in the main or center room. (During the winter, Mother always heated water for morning washing of hands and face.)

Summers meant outdoors. We enjoyed the hammock, tied between the pear tree and the house, the garden, and the grapes. We salted down green beans in a huge crock, and later I heard the old wives' tale that a woman never canned food during her period or the food would be sure to spoil. The beans were weighted down by a heavy stone on a round board into which holes had been drilled. Father joked when we "put down" the beans that he had brought a huge stone from Holland, knowing there was gold on the streets in America, but not knowing whether there were any rocks. When the beans were eaten during the winter, they had to be soaked for a couple of hours to get rid of the salt.

I particularly remember July 14, 1910. My mother was sitting on the cistern, doubled up and holding her hand on her back. She told me to go to Mrs. Velzing, take my nightie, and stay there all night—a rare treat—and send Mrs. DeYoung over right away because, she said, she wasn't feeling well. And so it was that my future stepmother, Jennie Koopmans DeYoung, helped bring my younger brother, George Albert August, into the world.

The house has long since been demolished, but I can still see the orchard and almost taste the Russet apples. The house was not as up-to-date as most in that area, so the rent was low. During those three or four years my parents were able to save five hundred dollars, which was the down payment on a \$3,300, four-bedroom house located at 69 Mayfield Street in Rochester. Instead of buying the home through an established contractor, my parents elected to have three carpenter friends build their home, and because of this the house had been extremely well built with some extras. (In 1948, my father, widowed a second time, sold the house for \$10,000.)

Though my parents had many Dutch friends in this country, they had no relatives here and missed them, and—even more—the close friends they had left behind. Father was always a devoted correspondent with both friends and relatives. He kept careful account in a notebook of the dates on which he received or sent letters. In 1913, a decision was made to go to Holland. Then World War I broke out. I am not sure whether this trip was to be a visit or to return there permanently, but I assume the former.

I don't know exactly when or why we moved from Atlantic Avenue to Hennekey Park (now called Akron Street) but we did live there in two different rented houses. One incident which happened at the first house was when my father was babysitting and I was nowhere to be seen. After looking everywhere, Father found me asleep on the child's seat of the outhouse. Father was out of work at the time and Mother told me later she had walked home from doing housework for someone to save the five-cent streetcar fare, and then added a penny to bring home a half dozen bananas.

The second house we rented was next to a grocery store, which was located in the "front" room of the owner's house. Purchases were entered in a small notebook for us and recorded by the grocer. We paid by the week and whoever paid the bill was given a small bag of licorice drops or sourballs. Henk and I took turns paying the bill.

Our bedrooms were heated only by whatever warmth drifted up through the registers. Henk read with feet on the pot-bellied stove in the parlor. There I celebrated my tenth birthday with a party. My future stepsister, Catherine De Young, was a guest, and my father told us stories about Tyll Eilenspiegel.

John Hennekey, who was the constable, lived at the corner of Main Street and Hennekey Park. He held court in a building similar to the movable wooden booths used for voting. When court was in session, there was always a crowd. I recall talking later about the Veenema case. It seems Veenema's chickens ran into his neighbor's yard at times. The neighbor became so abusive that Veenema finally built a fence about 12-14 feet high between his lot and the neighbor's. Since the fence was only three feet away from the neighbor's house, it cut out light to their house. When the case came to court, the neighbor complained, among other things, that Veenema had called her a "smeerlap." The constable asked for a translation. Literally, "greaserag" was the answer, but actually it meant crook. Veenema won the case. The neighbors had no other recourse except to move, and the very next day Veenema took the fence down.

During election time, when Hennekey was up for reelection, the children went around singing: "I vote, I vote for John De Groot (pronounced Grote) to keep the nannygoats off of the road."

Around 1915, we purchased the house on Mayfield Street. The memories of the henhouse and chickenyard, the grape arbor, the apple tree, the huge front porch, the gray shingles, the narrow street (we were the third house on the street), and the neighbors, as they moved in, always compel me, even today, to drive through Mayfield Street when I revisit Rochester. I can still visualize the mailbox at the corner of Winton Road and Mayfield Street, the snowdrifts—that section was still country—so deep that my mother had to put on high rubber boots just to go to the mailbox. I remember coming home from school at noon and having to change leggings. And oh, yes! I wore long underwear under my black stockings. I can see the blue serge dress, the rose-colored wool dress, both with stiff white collars and loose ties, and the country school. The modern city school, named Hendrik Hudson, was built when Brighton, New York, was annexed to Rochester.



Elferink Family

To the best of my knowledge, just two pupils from that country school went on to finish college at the University of Rochester: my brother, Henry, in 1925, and a girl, Belmont Thompson, shortly before that.

My parents often took me with them to various affairs, while my brother Henk, or Hank, which he was also called, was always delighted to remain at home to care for our younger brother, provided he had a new Horatio Alger or one of the many other books that were always available. Henk spoiled my American-born brother by giving him more rock candy or cookies than my mother had allotted them for the evening. Though there was ten years difference between them (with me in the middle), my brothers were always close, even to the day George was killed in an automobile accident on May 7, 1938, at the age of twenty-seven. Henk was a student at heart with an insatiable curiosity, and an avid reader all his life. George, only seven when Mother died, suffered probably more than any of us realized, for he had a difficult time even in the first grade, and never finished high school. Both brothers had a great sense of humor, which, coupled with love and understanding from the older brother, formed a great bond between them.

At Dutch dances, my father taught me how to waltz, schottische and polka. He never danced with other women, but Mother always had a partner for every dance. In their circle of friends, she was one of the few women who played cards. Often on Friday nights, the three Apeldoorn brothers and my parents sat around the kitchen table to play Pandoer, a Dutch game for four. Since that made five, one person would sit out each hand. I was allowed to stay up until refreshment time, so I learned to love playing cards.

Mother enjoyed the daily paper and my father made it a practice to discuss what was going on with her. Many years later, when he lived in my home, he used to mark articles and editorials in Time, Life, and other periodicals for my husband and me to read when we could take time from our busy work schedule. When I came home from teaching school, he would discuss the latest news over a cup of tea as he had always done with Mother.

I had been in high school only three days when my mother, aged forty, died on February 10, 1918, from an enlarged liver, listed as carcinoma on her death certificate, after an illness of only three weeks. Father, in his grief, listened to the

undertaker and had the open coffin in our living room, when in Holland he would have decided on cremation. Being freethinkers and not churchgoers, we had no minister. How strong Father was to be able to talk to the friends and neighbors who had gathered in our home to pay their last respects. Father spoke about Mother as "wife"; Edward Rysewyk, a very close friend, spoke of her as "a mother"; a third man spoke of her as "a friend." (I am not sure, but I think this was John van Stokrum from Buffalo.) I had suffered many a slur from so-called "Christian" children about my not going to church, not believing in God, and similar accusations. Now I heard: "Your mother was buried like a dog." Father pointed out that we must not blame the children; it was their parents who did not understand. Father said that he could not be a hypocrite and call a minister at the time of death when we never went to or supported a church. We already knew he did not believe in or fear or look forward to another life.

My mother, Grada Berendina Elbert, was born in Hengelo, Overijssel, on September 28, 1877. On my honeymoon, in 1931, I met her family, the Elberts—her brother, Albert, and sisters, Jenneken Overbeek, Hanna de Wolf, Aaltje Bergers, and half-sister, Jans Wissink, as well as their spouses. Her brother, Henry, died on March 27, 1918, in Chicago, a month after her death. She was orphaned very young and I have little information about her youth. Her father was Berend Jan Elbert; her mother Jenneken ter Waarbeek. As a young girl, she worked in a spinning factory and lived with a family named Kuipers. She married her girlhood sweetheart, my father, on March 3, 1899.

Mother never seemed frail to me, I suppose because of her vitality, though it may have been nervous energy. From my mother-in-law, I later learned that she had not come from a strong family. In 1930, my mother-in-law questioned her son about my health when we became engaged. Indeed, my mother, her parents, and three siblings died young. There was great resemblance between the siblings. They had her fair complexion with blood vessels close to the surface of the skin, high cheek bones, and thin lips. I considered Mother with her hazel eyes as gentle and delicate rather than frail-looking. My oldest niece, in her early forties, resembles Mother greatly, and is and looks like a very gentle person but with great stamina.

Mother wore her medium brown hair in pompadour style most of the time. From her pictures it looks as if she might have used a "rat" over which she combed the hair away from her forehead, but I do not recall ever seeing her use one. I do remember using huge steel or wire hairpins to curl her hair in the days before permanents. Then, she would part it in the middle, as she had in earlier days. She must have been about five feet seven inches tall, and had long arms, not the prettiest of hands, and large feet. The cobbler always told me he should really charge more to repair her size nine high shoes. She was rather flat-chested and, because of this I suppose, loved to wear flouncy ruffled blouses with gored or wide A-line skirts. She walked quickly and took rather large steps.

Mother was quick-tempered and outspoken, but Father was patient with her. Once, when my parents and I were going to a Dutch double-wedding reception (two Adema brothers married the Nyhof sisters), it was raining so hard that my father suggested waiting a while. Mother grabbed her umbrella, took me by the hand, and we caught the streetcar and started off for the wedding. Later my father arrived, smiling and understanding her impatience. Everyone loved her because she was so sympathetic, helpful, and kind. They understood and accepted her quick ways.

Years after she had visited us, Femia Hagedoorn Van Ry told me how my mother had helped to nurse her back to health by making her rest and eat nourishing food. Femia had caught pneumonia during a short jail term for taking part in a labor dispute in the Paterson, New Jersey, silk stocking factory where she worked. (Femia and Joe Van Ry have just celebrated their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary.)

Mother was very exacting in many ways: about the way I pulled and straightened the fringe of the white spread at the foot of my bed, the way I darned my stockings, which I learned to do at the age of seven, and the way we shined our shoes. I learned to measure the ingredients for white, graham, and raisin bread in the bread mixer while Father or my brother turned the handle. I learned how to blacken the stove, too!

Mother was a lively person, sang a great deal and loved dancing and fun. She often played the Edison phonograph (Amberola it was called) and sang along

with "The Bird on Nellie's Hat." And how she could whistle. I still know a few of the Dutch songs she sang.

One of my earliest recollections about Father is that he was bald, though from pictures, as a youth he looked handsome with a brush cut. He used to tell me he had been in a fire and ask why didn't I buy him a wig when I grew up. I remember he was always more patient at explaining things when I was being reprimanded by Mother. On the other hand, he never helped me with explanations of games or questions immediately if he was reading, whereas Mother understood my impatience and would come to help or call over an answer to my question.

Although he had fished for eel and pickerel as a boy, he only consented to go fishing with friends in Rochester if he could take something to read. Finally he gave in to their urging and caught two bullheads. He often recalled the fact that he buried them in the backyard, not knowing bullheads were good to eat, yet later fishing was probably his favorite physical hobby. He accumulated every conceivable bit of fishing equipment and carried a huge, heavy tackle box.

In their later years Father and my stepmother went to Canada for a couple of weeks every summer with their friends, the Vandenberges. At eighty, when he lived in my home, he was delighted to go to Canada with Arie Kooyman and Harold Pacholke. He wrote to some friends: "I have just returned from a wonderful fishing trip to Canada with two friends—three grandfathers, 55, 63, and 80, but after very good fishing, upon entering Ohio, we sang "Beautiful Ohio." Loving nature, he wrote many a poem in Dutch expressing his deep feelings, often after a fishing trip, having once more experienced sunsets, calm water, birds and woods.

As children, he taught us to put a worm on a hook, be patient, sit still, and wait for a bite. He even let us row while he trolled for a big one. He and his friends would go fishing on Irondequoit Bay very early in the morning on Sundays. Later in the morning, the women and children walked I would say a good two miles to meet the fathers, who would row us across to picnic. As we carried the food, we sang Dutch songs that had the right rhythm for walking, such as, "Sie daar komt de Waschvrouw aan; zy is vroeg opgestaan" ("See there comes the laundry gal; she got up early.") Coming home, we sang, "De maan

schynt door de bomen" ("The moon shines through the trees.") Tired as we were, this made the walk home easier.

At the picnic spot, my younger brother and Charles Rysewyk, who were only a year old, would be put to sleep in a low hammock, while the other children gathered twigs. Soon the fathers had the fish cleaned, coffee had come to a boil three times (that was the recipe) over an open fire, and the smell of sunfish and perch frying invited us to the midday meal. Fruit, cake, cookies for dessert. How juicy and full of flavor fresh fish is!

As a teenager I was able to row across the bay. The Rysewyk brothers had built an excellent rowboat, and later owned a motorboat. The Rysewyks also rented a cottage at Inspiration Point on the bay for seventy-five dollars per season. It was a cottage in the rough but we had such good times there. We hiked, swam at the Point, and rowed the boat singing, as my best girlfriend, Rika Van Niel, played her uke.

My father, being a machinist, was not as highly paid as a carpenter, bricklayer, mason, or painter. I have a letter in which he was offered three dollars per day for a nine-hour day in 1910. Not until he became foreman in the Symington Anderson Gun Shop during World War I did he earn anything comparable to the hourly rates of the building trades. I cannot possibly guess what he earned at the time of Mother's death, but he paid a housekeeper eight dollars per week, exactly what she had earned in her previous job with a wealthy family.

Though few of the women went to night school at that time, both Mother and Father took "English for Foreigners," and both allowed my brother to help and correct their English at home. I remember one incident, when Mother was reading "Clumsy Claude" in the funnies, she read: "Do a little deed of kidneys every day." My brother laughed and told her "kindness," not "kidneys." How I winced later when I heard women especially pronounce common words incorrectly—like "valcuum cleaner," ladies "celery" instead of auxiliary, or "handle me the butter"—because they had never allowed anyone to correct them. Perhaps the reason Father became more proficient in English than most was that he loved and had a great feeling for his own language, and had been editor of the union paper in Holland.

At Father's surprise eightieth birthday party, with a hundred and two relatives and friends present, my husband began his comments with, "Next to my parents, my father-in-law is my most loved and unforgettable character." To me, his daughter, he was the greatest influence in my life. The older I grow the more I realize just how much he did influence me, and all to the good, with his flexibility, adaptability and curiosity, his desire for learning, respect for education, his great humanity and his love for individuals.

How easily and clearly I can still see him! His bald head was thickly fringed with black hair, later with a sprinkling of gray. He was always rather well filled-out, with broad shoulders that he held erect until he was seventy-five. He had large bluish-gray eyes, thick eyebrows, a good-sized nose and mouth, full lips and rather large ears, set close to his head, from which one could always see some hairs sprouting. At one time he had a moustache.

I hated the black machinists' shirts he wore around the house; in later years he wore up-to-date sport shirts. Rarely was he unshaven. He was immaculately clean, always scrubbed his plump hands after a day in the shop, before we ate our supper. Years later, when Charles, my youngest son, went into the auto repair work, I told him, "At twenty-five it is time to try another field and take chances (thinking that my husband had begun his own consulting engineering business too late) and, Charles, you have a choice, you can have clean, well-groomed hands as your grandfather always did, or you can have grimy hands like our local electrical repair man."

Father looked distinguished and confident whether addressing a business meeting of the Dutch Dramatic Club, a small soapbox gathering of Socialists, or a large political rally in a hall. How stylish he looked in his brown tropical suit, when at seventy-five, he boarded the El Capitan from Chicago to California. He looked serious, yet smiled readily. He was tolerant and sympathetic. He loved people of all types, but could not tolerate snobs, professional intellectual or bragging bricklayer. His love for people could not extend to tolerating that way of behaving.

He read avidly. A romantic all his life, he read little fiction. He enjoyed historical biographies, such as Clemenceau's and Lincoln's, biographies of radicals,

such as Emma Goldman, Clarence Darrow and Eugene V. Debs, magazines, such as Appeal to Reason and others involved in causes. He read classical plays and poetry by Schiller, Goethe, Vondel, Shaw, Kipling, and such American poets as Whitman, Markham, Longfellow, and many others. He subscribed to the Metropolitan art series and became familiar with famous buildings and paintings. (His oldest grandson was able to use the stickers from that art series in one of his art papers at college.) He visited the art galleries in Rochester, as well as the Ryksmuseum in Holland and some in Germany. He read resumes of operas so he could listen to the music on Saturday afternoons with more understanding. Though never a churchgoer, he and my stepmother often listened to sermons on the radio, sometimes sending a dollar when a request was made. He looked for the best in every person and thing, and appreciated nature to the fullest. Women, he said, must be able to look through their kitchen windows to see the beauty of nature to enable them to carry on. When grieved or depressed, he always suggested looking at the beauty of natural surroundings.

He made celebrations, not only out of birthdays, but of many occasions, even April Fool's Day. On Halloween, he was one of the kids. He had a huge pump from which he could squirt water from an upstairs window when children came to our house. They expected it and loved it. He tried to give us alternatives to getting into trouble. (In those days, boys and girls threw cabbages on front porches, upset garbage cans, and the larger boys even overturned outhouses. The local constable had his hands full.) One mischief was to unwind a string wound on an empty thread spool, notched on the ends, tightly against a window pane. By placing a ten penny nail through the hole in the spool and holding the nail in the left hand and pulling the string with the right, a weird rattling noise was created. Because he was a pacifist, on the Fourth of July we were allowed only to have sparklers and canes with caps, which we could pound on the walk—no guns, ever.

Throughout his life he composed rhymes, worthy of being called poetry, for anniversaries, graduations, wedding receptions, or even as an accompaniment to Christmas presents. At Christmas, 1949, I received a toy washing machine (It was my first automatic, a Blackstone.) after reading Dad's jingle:

On Christmas eve Good Will to men
We gather around the tree
We sing the old fine songs again
To all the world and Thee.

To keep us fresh, and pure in mind
The clothes and faces clean
Nerve wracking is your daily grind...
Plus a rattling wash (ing) machine.

So now with soap and the new machine
You can do a lot of things in between.

When Mother was ill, just before she died, Father taught me a poem in Dutch to be recited at my Eighth Grade graduation party:

Verborgen in de takken,
Verscholen in het groen,
Daar zat een vogel nestje
Van het alderliefst fatsoen
En uit dat vogelnestje
Daar klonk een zacht gepiep
Als of een jonge vogel
Zacht voor zyn moeder riep.

Hidden in the branches
Concealed in the green
There sits a bird's nest
Of the very prettiest design
And from that bird's nest
There came a soft peep-peep
As if a young bird
Softly called its mother.

He taught me how the butcher's son recited it with rather broad gestures, how several others interpreted it. I ended up using the minister's son's version, delivered with great feeling and exaggerated facial expressions. My teacher, Florence Lattaye, commented, when she wrote after Mother died, that I must be thankful that I had such a "caring" father.

In spite of disappointments and reversals, Father came a long way. At barely thirty, he became editor of "De Metalbewerker." His desire to do whatever he did to the best of his ability comes out in everyone's estimates of him—his brother's, his teachers', the army's, in the references to him in Een Halve Eeuw, and certainly in my opinion of him.

In 1907, as soon as his English improved, he joined a union but was aghast at how far behind they were in their organization compared with the Dutch unions. I don't know just when he ceased to be an active member, or even a member. In a letter dated November 16, 1915, the General Secretary Treasurer of the International Association of Machinists wrote:

Your comments as set forth are in line with our impressions. Nevertheless, you will see that we are powerless under the circumstances. What is of more importance to us is the fact that such working machinists, gifted as you are with intelligence, should remain on the outside while seeing things going on inside to which you so strenuously object.

I remember how active he was in the Socialist Party, though again he became incensed with the lack of dedication. On one occasion a Socialist speaker was due to appear on our corner at a soapbox meeting. When the speaker did not arrive, Father had to speak. Later he learned the man had not come because it was a Jewish holiday.

I remember an occasion when I was very young sitting next to Mother in the Labor Lyceum in Rochester and hearing Father, dressed in a prison suit, speak on behalf of Eugene V. Debs. Brother Henk and I went to Socialist Sunday School by streetcar. My father liked the songs we sang, many of which had been written by Kendrik P. Shedd, a former German professor, who had been discharged from the faculty of the University of Rochester because of his Socialist Party affiliation. Perhaps because Father had been, or felt that he was, an underdog, he had great compassion for people in trouble. He wrote in defense of Tom Mooney, the Rosenbergs, and Sacco and Vanzetti. He organized a committee in Rochester to raise money for Domela Nieuwenhuis, the anarchist who had no pension in his old age. He voted the Socialist Party until Franklin Roosevelt ran for office. By then he had decided that socialism could best be achieved through the Democratic Party in the United States. He admired Eleanor Roosevelt and always read her column, My Day.

Father never returned to the Lutheran Church of his childhood or joined any church. He was, as Julian Huxley said about his father, "pro-Darwin and anti-clerical, who coined the word 'agnostic' to describe his own religious position, as one not prepared to accept orthodox or indeed any dogmatic views on the origin and destiny of man in the absence of scientific evidence. He preferred to remain a freethinker (which is what Father called himself), refusing to accept the existence of an all-powerful and omniscient God, religious miracles or personal immortality, until they were properly validated." Huxley also rejected the term "atheist" because the existence or nonexistence of God could not be scientifically proved. However, Father often used the term "atheist" in referring to himself.

To understand Father, we have to go back to his parents, who lived off the land, and who were fortunate enough to own a brick farmhouse that they had built in the 1800's. They lived and died there. His brother and wife lived in the same house until it was demolished to make room for a road in the late 1960's.



Elferink Farmhouse

They had all been farmers, but had to work at extra jobs to survive. Grandfather was known to have been a poacher and smuggled kummel from Germany. Both grandparents worked at a rented loom in their house in the winter for thirty cents a week, and wove cloth at two or two-and-a-half guilders a bolt. They may have wished for slight improvements in their loom, but probably never imagined that the remarkable inventions of the Industrial Revolution in England would also revolutionize the textile industry in Driene, making their province the leading textile center in the Netherlands and their hand loom an antique.

My mother worked in the textile factory, my father in a machine shop. Conditions for the working man were far from ideal. Gradually, Father in his youth became disenchanted with the church because it was not cognizant of the working man's conditions. He was never so intolerant, though, that he didn't enjoy the carols and hymns, and he went to church for weddings, memorial services, or for the dedication of children. Some of his friends were adamant on these points, refusing to go to a church wedding even if it involved one of their own children. I remember one Christmas when the Apeldoorn brothers (there were nine children in the Apeldoorn family) refused to stay at home for the giving of gifts.*

To show Father's tolerance, when Miss Jennie Hennefrend applied as housekeeper (our second—the first was Sietzke (Alice) Apeldoorn) after Mother died, she told Father, "But, Mr. Elferink, I hear that you do not go to church." Father made it clear to her that she could certainly go to church on Sundays; she could even pray before meals if she wished to, and that he would be glad to read from the Bible, at times. I remember distinctly, when she covered her eyes to say grace before our first meal together, my brother (aged eight) said, "What's the matter, Aunt Jen, do you have a headache?" She remained with us until my father remarried.

Dekker's† "A Prayer of the Uninformed," which Father and I translated from the Dutch some years ago, expressed what he felt about God.

* In Holland, Sint Nicolaas Day was celebrated with its gift exchange on December 5. December 25 was purely a religious holiday which my parents did not celebrate.

† Edward Douwes Dekker (pseud. Multatuli), 1820–1887.

I do not know whether we were created for a purpose,
Or just by chance. Or whether a God
Or Gods amuse themselves with our grief, and sneer
At the imperfection of our being. If this were true,
It would be dreadful! Who is at fault
That the weak are weak, the sick are sick, and the stupid stupid?

If we were created by design, with an aim,
And through our imperfections fall short of that. . .
Then the blame of our errors, falls not upon us.
Nor upon the creation. . .but upon the CREATOR! Call him Zeus
Or Jupiter, Jehovah, Baal, Djau. . .it matters not;
He does not exist, or he must be GOOD, and must forgive us
For not understanding him. 'Twas up to him
To reveal himself and this he did not do. Had he done so
He would have done it in such a way that no one could be in doubt,
That everyone could say: I feel Him, know Him, and understand Him.

What others claim to know about God
Does not help me. I do not understand him! I ask why
He revealed himself unto others, and not unto me.
Is one child dearer to a father than another?
As long as one human being does not know God,
It is travesty to believe in such a God!
A child who calls his father in vain is blameless
But a father who leaves his child's call unanswered is cruel.
And better too is the belief: there is no father,
Than one who would be silent to his child!

Perhaps eventually we will be wiser! Perhaps some time
We will see that He exists, that He is watching over us,
And that His silence has a meaning, has a cause. Well, then,
As soon as we know, then is the time for praise
But not before. . . . Not now! It would grieve God
To realize that we prayed without faith.
It is stupid to attempt to penetrate the ignorance
Of today with a light that doesn't shine as yet.

Serve Him? Foolishness! Had he desired service,
He would have revealed to us in which way.

And it is absurd, that He expects of us
Adoration, service, praise. . . whilst He Himself
Leaves uncertain the manner in which to serve him.
If we are not serving God according to his wish,
Then it is His mistake, His fault. . . and no fault of ours!

Meanwhile--'til we become wiser--is good and evil one?
I cannot see how God assists us in recognizing
Evil from good. On the contrary! He who does good, in order to
Receive God's reward, turns
Good to evil, by commercializing. And he, who avoids wickedness
For fear of displeasing God, is a coward.

I know Thee not, oh God! I called to You. I searched. . .
I beseeched Thee to answer, but You were silent. I was so eager
To do Thy will, not for fear of punishment, or hope of reward
But like a child who minds his father. . . for love
But You were silent. . . always silent.

And I wander aimlessly, and long
For the hour, when I shall know, that You exist.
Then I shall ask: "Father, why did you wait until now
To show Your child, that it had a Father."
And that it has not stood alone in the struggle,
That difficult struggle for humanity and right?
Or were You certain that I would serve You
Without knowing Your will? That I would render service
As You wish it, unaware of your existence.
Could that be true?

Answer, Father, if You exist, answer!
Leave me not in despair, Father! Do not remain silent
To that tortured cry; "Laba sabacthani?"
(Why hast Thou forsaken me?)
So groans the unenlightened on his self-chosen cross
And writhes in pain, moaning: "I am thirsty."

The enlightened, the one who is certain, the one who knows God--
And hands him gail, shouting lustily: "Hear! He calls his Father!"
And mutters: "Thank Thee, O Lord, that I am not like him!"
And sings the psalm: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in
The counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

The speculators become wealthy by haggling at the stockmarket.
The Lord remains silent. . . . Oh God, there is no God!

Father himself felt if God is Love or Nature, why not say that. He realized that many Christians no longer believed in a personal God. He had always been able to converse with ministers, knowing that they, too, had causes for which they worked, and succeeded in furthering peace in living in the "here-and-now" as he called it.

Because so many of our friends did not go to church, Father was often asked to speak at funerals. He would tell something about the life of the deceased, their leaving Holland, and their having been a good person, wife, husband or parent. Often he quoted poetry, such as Tennyson's Crossing the Bar, verses from the Bible, or, in his own words, "Life gives, takes away, and then leaves us to contemplate upon the futility of selfishness and vain regrets." I attended these services many times and was always touched anew. I wish I could remember the many poems he used as a closing.

Marcus DeZee wrote to my father: "These things (the services) are something we don't forget. I have had several very favorable comments from a few of the neighbors, who heard you both times, for Dad, and Mother, six years ago. . . When I think of the hokum some pastors get paid for, I feel you should accept a small remembrance, so please accept this in the spirit in which it is meant."

Father was very proud of our success in school, never realizing how well educated he was himself through his own efforts. My brother, Henk, was, I think, brilliant, and worked his way through the University of Rochester in three years, just missing Phi Beta Kappa. He too read all his life, while I have never been a great reader. Henk's wife, Anna Van Niel, is of Dutch birth, as was my husband. This pleased the parents on both sides.

My father wrote literally hundreds of letters to editors as protests and in support of causes, copies of which I have retained. I think it was a source of relief to him and an outlet for his emotions. He clipped articles, letters, and poems, which I have gradually weeded out.

It was of such help to me to have heard both sides of most public issues. In college Economics, I understood the advantages and disadvantages of government ownership, capitalism, and labor movements before class discussions began. I learned to say little about not going to church and bewildered many girls when

they found out that I did not believe in God. To have been brought up in an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding is of inestimable advantage. How could I be irritated when, at the dress rehearsal of my marriage, my father refused to "give" me away. He said I wasn't his to give. The Unitarian minister changed the words to, "Who rejoiceth that this man taketh this woman?"

Everything had such deep meaning for Father, yet my children and I remember him for his joviality, which overshadowed his seriousness. Funny, sometimes corny, I remember how he used to reverse letters: Bappy Hirthday, Rears and Sawbuck, Lausch and Bomb.

Father was the first one to admit that he had changed from being radical, had mellowed as people usually do as they grow older. He admitted, when he visited Holland in 1932, that Stork Brothers & Company were probably ahead of most factories of the time and that he had taken the wrong position in the Metalworkers Union. As a Unitarian, adaptability to change is the most important characteristic in our philosophy of life. His emotions and feelings for other people made him a great humanitarian. My brother wrote to David Rhys Williams after his death: "My father was not a great man but he performed his work and his obligations well. My sister and I are what we are because of him—and my mother too—and we share his convictions."

My father fought for causes because of the conditions that surrounded him in his youth. The Socialistic movement made him feel for those caught up in poverty. No wonder he sang such songs as: A Rebel I Will Be (to the tune of Kodak Town):

A Socialist I am indeed,
The name I'm proud to own,
I've got rebellion in my heart,
It's bred in flesh and bone.
If you would know why I rebel,
Just ope your eyes and see
My countless brothers suffering
The ills that need not be.

and Bring Back My Money (to the tune of My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean):

The Capit'lists over the ocean,
The Capit'lists this side the sea,
The Capit'lists in ev'ry nation
Are taking my money from me.

The Socialists over the ocean,
The Socialist this side the sea,
The Socialist in ev'ry nation
Will bring back my money to me.

Vote right, my friends, over the ocean,
Vote right, my friends, this side the sea,
Vote comfort and wealth to all people
So vote back my money to me.

At the time of father's death, David Rhys Williams, the Unitarian minister, who had officiated at my wedding and when my brother George died, was recovering from a heart attack. The local Methodist minister, Richard W. Pettit, who knew Father and had visited him often during his last illness, agreed to do a memorial service that would convey Father's belief. As part of the service, he quoted a paragraph from a biographical sketch I had written in 1948:

Through Father's entire life, he has tried to see the other person's point of view and respect it. He could not understand the belief in a personal God, and, if God means Love, as, indeed, many of us define Him, then, says Father, call it Love, but do not be deceived by the indefinite. He has believed in the brotherhood of man politically as well as for a code to live by. He has tried to carry out Christian living, if anyone ever has, with his conscience and heart as a guide. He has, perhaps, the religion of common sense. I, personally, like to think that his faith in a right life, in a right world, is bigger than any creed, because at seventy-five, he still believes in the ideals for which he fought as a youth.

The Reverend Pettit also read What Is the Spirit of Youth, written by Dr. Williams on the occasion of Father's eightieth birthday celebration in Rochester:

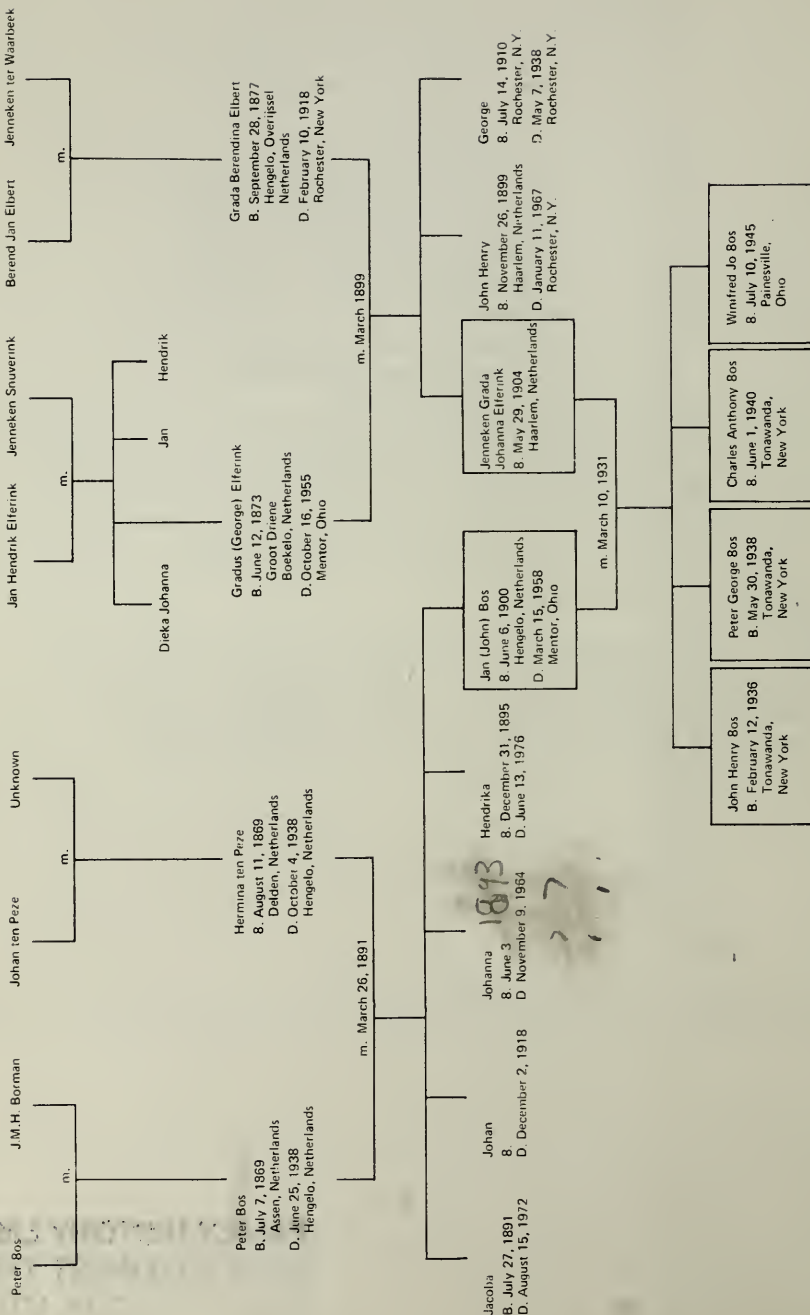
'Tis the Spirit of the Lover who sees and
 glorifies the beauty in another's life.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Adorner who takes a
 wholesome and self-respecting concern for
 his own personal appearance.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Crusader who goes
 forth to champion some high and holy cause.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Explorer who never feels
 so much at home as in unfamiliar territory.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Troubadour who would
 bring poetry and music into the drabness
 of human existence.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Prodigal who spends
 generously of strength and substance on
 some enterprise of grand desire.
 'Tis the Spirit of the Dreamer who dares to
 look forward to a better world for all mankind.
 Whether one be eighty or eighteen, one may possess
 the Spirit of Youth. Yours is the Spirit of Youth.
 The Spirit of Youth is the hope of the World!

He ended with these words:

All the problems solved by George Elferink are solved; all the
 values he achieved are his forever. Those problems not solved are
 still to be solved; those values not yet known to him await dis-
 covery. His was a life devoted to TRUTH, JUSTICE, LOVE. . .

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Chapter V



CHAPTER V

A New Generation

In retrospect, my life has been one of ever-increasing joy, difficult at times in childhood, marriage and retirement—difficulties which most people encounter and live through. The loss of my mother was lessened by an unusually sympathetic and understanding father. The loss of my husband's love and companionship was made bearable by exceptionally thoughtful and caring children, many friends and sheer determination to look ahead and not dwell on the past or what might have been. My adjustment to retirement was eased by my zest for living and better-than-average health.

I can remember being very sad and scared after my mother died. If someone's mother was ill, I felt that she too would die, although I had a very wholesome attitude toward death. "A human being, like a bird," Father said, "should be remembered with all its beauty." From that time to this, I am almost overcome with sympathy when I hear of a death, and the loss of my mate has only made me more emotional at death, though my feelings are controlled by understanding.

I did not think of having only one green wool skirt, which Mother had made from one of hers turned inside out, and two middies to wear to high school. Our housekeeper, Alice, always had to wash one separately during the middle of the week and finally complained to my father about it. However, I do remember wanting a taffeta skirt and fancy blouse for Sundays because my Socialist friend, Margaret Zipke, had one. Father said then, and at other times, "Better times are coming." And I answered, "But I want them now." How hard it must have been for him not to be able to give us more of the material things.

After Mother's death in 1918, letters from relatives in Holland kept coming for weeks (this was before airmail). Our housekeeper always made Father eat his supper before opening them. As he read the letters, he would break down sometimes and walk outside around the house. "After the rain comes sunshine," he said, "after one's tears come smiles."

I had entered the business course in high school, though after Mother died my father was asked, "Why don't you let her keep house?" My eighth grade

teacher, Florence Lattaye, wrote me, "It is most important that you keep on in your school, provided the home duties are not too heavy for you." Father, too, felt that any education I could get would be of greater value to me than any money he might save, even though it was expensive for him, a working man, to pay for a housekeeper.

When I was sixteen, my father married our friend, Jennie Koopmans De-Young. Her older daughter, Cora, was already married to Sietze (Sid) Jongedyk; Harry, a salesman, was a few years older than Henry, my brother, and was away a great deal; Catherine was nine months older than I; and Richard, seven, was two years younger than my brother George. Since there was a need for four bedrooms, my stepmother moved into our house. The DeYoung brothers had one bedroom, my brothers another, and Catherine and I shared a room, which proved to be a very pleasant arrangement. Pa and Ma, as we called them, had the fourth and smallest room. My father insisted on single beds for all of us.

My stepmother relieved me of many of my household responsibilities. Before that Henry and I kept house one summer by ourselves, even canning tomatoes and beans. Rika Boers, later a stepaunt, came once a week to wash, iron (we still had a coal stove), and help me bake. I have no idea what she was paid for a day's work, but I always looked forward to that day. I was only fourteen. To earn spending money, Catherine and I worked in a grocery store every other Saturday at twenty-five cents an hour for a ten-hour day. The other Saturday we took turns helping Ma.

So many small adjustments had to be made, it must have been difficult for both parents, and, I am sure, took a lot of understanding. Little things, such as always having the shades drawn half way, when before my father had always let in all the light he could. Carrying up hot water for baths, until a gas hot water heater was installed, was Dad's job. (Some time during 1921 we put in electricity for lights.) A large wash with many cotton shirts to iron fell to Ma. My brother said, when Dad told him he was going to be married again, "But what will happen to our books?" Therein lay the vast difference! Ma was not interested in books or intellectual matters but was, of necessity, an extremely practical person, particularly when it came to money. Ma had not had an easy life in Holland nor here, having lost two of her children to diphtheria, having

her alcoholic father live with her for a period of years, having to keep boarders, and even having to milk a cow, with such a busy household.

Both Pa and Ma provided value to each other's family that neither could have obtained alone. For instance, because Ma relieved me of my household duties, I was able to finish high school. And my father insisted that Catherine leave the factory and take a business course, after which she became an excellent statistical typist.

I managed to finish high school, having worked for two summers as typist and stenographer at the Stromberg Carlson Company. After graduation, I worked at Kodak Park West (an hour's ride by streetcar, crocheting of course) as secretary to Dr. Hans Thatcher Clarke, head of the Synthetic Organic Laboratory from January 1922 to the spring of 1923. My brother always encouraged me to think of college and I was transferred to the Stenographic Department at the Kodak Office so that I could go back to high school mornings. I took Latin I, German I, Algebra I and Geometry, working in the afternoons. Each night I had to skip one subject's homework. During that summer, I was tutored in Latin II and studied German by myself, passing the high school examinations.

In September, 1924, I entered the University of Rochester as a day student, on condition that I made up Intermediate Algebra. My high school was close to the University so I could skip over there to work it in, and got through it satisfactorily. For the first six weeks of college, I did stenographic work for Dr. Murlin, who discovered insulin for the treatment of diabetes.* He suggested that I borrow money so that I could stay in school full time for, he said—and I realized the truth of his statement—I could not have kept up that pace for very long.

In my second year, I was lucky to get a position teaching shorthand and typing in the Rochester evening school. I had seen an ad in the paper for evening school business teachers, "Experience preferred." In the interview, I was asked why I thought I was able to teach shorthand and typing without teaching experience. With my usual blunt truthfulness, I told the interviewer: "I know someone who teaches shorthand in the evening school, and if she can teach shorthand, I can teach Greek." (I was referring to a very careless stenog-

* A Canadian doctor reported his discovery of insulin just before Dr. Murlin.

rapher in the same department where I was working.) I worked two evenings a week; first at \$3.50 for two hours, and later \$4.50. That was in 1925, and I taught every year until three days before I was married, on March 10, 1931.

Although I was attending college, I still had to pay Ma five dollars a week for board. We did have an arrangement, however, whereby I paid during the summer while I was working full time, but could owe the board during the school year when my money ran out. By the time I graduated, I owed \$673.20 for board and \$120 for a doctor bill and the clothes I bought for graduation. By continuing to teach night school, in addition to my day's work, I was able to pay it off in a little over a year, board plus interest. My brother had paid \$10.00 a week while he went to college.

This arrangement may seem strange, but we were over twenty. My father had never asked for any accounting of the money he earned. He never was a business man, and it was his custom to hand over his wages to Ma. From Ma's point of view, it was understandable that money was an important consideration when one realizes how difficult it had been for her when she first came to the United States. I assume my father could not persuade her to do differently.

At one time I did consider leaving home, but the dean cautioned me against it and I did not want to hurt my father, either. My younger stepbrother, Richard, chose not to go to college because he had heard the arguments about my financial arrangements. My brother, George, was unfairly treated, in spite of what my father tried to do, and finally did leave home. He and Catherine never finished high school.

George and Richard were teenagers and made much fun of my being captain of the baseball team at college. I was not exceptional in any sport but at least I took part in basketball, field hockey, and baseball. However, I was at my best in organizing and running things. Then, as now, if a suggestion is made, I am immediately appointed chairman to carry out the idea.

Because I felt that I was not smartly dressed, I had never dared to try out for a high school play. By the time I entered college, I felt more confident because I had the clothes I had worn as a stenographer. I was cast in the first

play I tried out for, as Mrs. Dudgeon in Shaw's The Devil's Disciple. However, the director asked me if I would mind letting his second choice have the part, since it was her last year, so I did a nonspeaking part. This was a great disappointment to me. I remember Henk saying, "Well, she looks the part." (Mrs. Dudgeon is a rather sharp, witchy character.) Afterwards, I was happy that the other girl did the part, for she died in her twenties in Japan. Being cast, however, made me feel that I really did have talent, which has proved to be true. My only experience in acting had been in the Rochester Dutch Dramatic Club which my father had organized. I had several parts in college plays but was limited in extracurricular activities because I was teaching two nights a week.

I was a better than average student at the University of Rochester. (If I don't count Math I. I was not well prepared and I had little interest in it.) I have never cared for science, but did enjoy Biology and particularly Geology. I majored in German and minored in English. I could have had a fellowship to study for a Master's Degree at the University of North Carolina, through Dr. J. Percival King, Head of the German Department, but felt that I wanted to get out of debt. The study would have been a comparison of the origin of the Frisian language with the German. There are many dialects in the various provinces of the Netherlands, but Friesland has its own language. This would have been a very interesting study for me, being Dutch by birth. Charlton Laird says in The Miracle of Language: "While all languages change constantly, Frisian, closely related to Anglian, has changed relatively little in fifteen hundred years."

During my last year at college, I had been told by my high school principal, who had advised me to go to college rather than Plattsburg Normal in New York, that there was a good possibility that I could teach German in his school. However, Miss Betz, a German teacher who was on a long leave of absence, was able to return to teaching when her mother died. My best offer was \$1,100 a year at Niagara Falls, teaching German and business subjects. I had been earning \$28 per week as a stenographer at Eastman Kodak. Since this was slightly more than \$1,400 a year, I decided living at home, even though the board had been raised, would be cheaper and more pleasant in some ways. Thus I started full-time secretarial work for Otto Cook at Kodak Office in June, 1918, at \$30 per week. He had been transferred from Kodak Park and appreciated my being able to help him

make contact with the men and women there, from many of whom I had taken dictation.

At home, there were sometimes bad feelings between the two sides of the family. I don't want to dwell on them, for Cora, the oldest of the stepchildren, was always fair to all of us. I love Catherine to this day, though we have very little in common. We really had fun as teenagers. My brother Henry could tease Catherine and she could take it better than I could. Ma was always encouraging us to go out and have a good time. She always said to live one day at a time. More than thirty years of companionship brought Ma and Pa together in spite of their differences and they were proud of each other's abilities. Father told her once, "You know you couldn't write a single poem, but I can't knit a simple stitch." I can remember how he held a skein of yarn as she wound it into a ball. She would serve the refreshments for his pinochle friends when it was his turn at our home, but she considered cards a waste of time and her fingers would fly as she knitted and they played. She did, however, enjoy fishing, and they went to Canada every summer for two weeks with another couple. They also attended Sunday afternoon baseball games when both George and Richard were on a team sponsored by Culver Motors. Her three older children took Pa and Ma for many an auto drive on Sunday afternoons or on trips of several days (Father never owned an automobile). Catherine's husband said, "Pa makes us see things in nature we never noticed before."

By the time I had been out of college two years, most of my friends were married and having babies. Catherine had a little girl and my brother had become the father of his first daughter. I still missed college activities. Of course, I had some close friends—and I still correspond with several of them. I also had my Dutch friends and, in particular, my lifelong girlfriend Rika Van Niel. And then Rika was engaged.

Then, over the Fourth of July weekend in 1930, my life entered a new and wonderful phase. I went to stay with my friend Sue Bos Brooks and fell in love with her cousin, John Bos. We had seen each other several times before that but it was at a picnic with Sue, her husband, and three other married couples in Emery Park near Buffalo that his sparkling, expressive, brown eyes attracted me, and his honest, sincere conversation completely enthralled me.

Returning from that memorable weekend, I ran upstairs and told my father, "Pa, John Bos took me home from Buffalo and I think I'm in love with him."

"Good," said Father, "he's from a fine family."

Our parents had been close friends in Holland and we had, in fact, spent one of our last days before leaving Holland with the Bos family. Both John and my brother remembered the ride we took in their surrey. John often told people he had fallen in love with me at age three, before I left for the United States.

The first time I met him as an adult was in the fall of 1925, soon after he emigrated to the United States. Like many young Dutchmen, John sought adventure and perhaps more opportunity than his small homeland offered. (At that time many young men went to the Dutch Indies, Africa, or the United States.)

John came for a visit with personal greetings from his parents. He was a very handsome young man, a bit on the heavy side at that time. I was in college, and looked upon him more or less as I had the usual Dutch visitors, as being one of Father's friends. In fact, I remember thinking "more dishes to wash, and less time to study."

At the picnic in Buffalo, John and I had joked about going to Europe together, and "painting the towns red." He was going to Holland for his parents' fortieth wedding anniversary in March, 1931. I had tried to get a transfer to Kodak Berlin, but positions were at a premium at that time everywhere and I was not successful. During the next ten days he called frequently and then visited unannounced, because he wanted to make sure I really was earnestly in love with him. It was a whirlwind courtship between Buffalo and Rochester and by October, we had honeymoon reservations with the Holland-American line for March, the next year.

On March 10, 1931, David Rhys Williams, Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, married us. Because we were both freethinkers, the words "Spirit of Love," were substituted for "God." We had worked out a very per-

sonal ceremony, which—with some additions—my daughter Wini used in 1967. This sort of very personal ceremony has now become quite common, but it was a “first” at that time, even in a Unitarian church.

We spent three months on our honeymoon in Holland. John said he saw more in that time than he had in the first twenty-five years of his life there. His oldest sister, Jacoba, a nurse, was still in Indonesia (called the Dutch East Indies at that time). His sister, Riek, with her husband, Johan, and three-year-old son, Thoni, had just returned to Holland, Johan having been manager of a tea plantation in Indonesia for twenty years. We had pooled our resources and had about \$1200 when we left for Holland. We spent most of the time with my in-laws, taking short trips and renting an automobile, many times taking family with us. The rest and excellent food my mother-in-law served soon added to my figure and I have never been able to get back to one hundred and twenty-five pounds.

It was heartwarming also to meet my parents' brothers and sisters, who, as I previously mentioned, lived in the same town. My father and mother had remained close to them through correspondence. John and I picnicked and partied with cousins on both sides. But the most revealing experience was what I learned while visiting the friends my father and mother had left behind.

Father had prepared three-by-five index cards with the names, addresses, and some comments. One, for instance, said “Reidel” in Dordrecht, and then, “Reidel loaned me the money to come to America. He has a printing concern, and has always been interested in a perpetual motion machine”; “Sluyters, Haarlem, were our intimate friends—their children were a little older than you and Henk”; “Hagtingius, Haarlem, learned to be a pharmacist when over forty—has a second younger family”; “Van de Veen, Leeuwarden, Friesland, has motorboat on the canal near his home.”

As we visited these families, unannounced, we would say: “We bring greetings from America.” Only one guess was needed—Elferink!

I learned a great deal about my parents. Mother had been just my age—twenty-six—when she left Holland. They were glad to see me, but oh, how

they wished my father would make a visit. Mr. Reidel told us he had said to my father, "I am loaning you this money to go to America, but if you pay it back, never let me hear that Henkie did not have enough to eat while you were paying it." The Sluyters told us that my parents would stop in after a Socialist meeting and go to the kitchen and lift up the lid on the coffee pot to see if there was any coffee! After Father remarried he seldom talked about my mother or Holland, although my stepmother was always interested in what my father wrote to his mother.

Returning about the middle of June from a glorious honeymoon, we lived in Buffalo. John's salary at Niagara Hudson Power Company, where he was an electrician-mechanic and assistant foreman, was cut from \$39 a week to \$34.50, reflecting a reduced work week. By mid-September I began teaching shorthand and typing at Bryant Stratton Business College at \$120 a month, which was soon cut to \$110 as conditions became worse in the Depression. Graduates from the school were glad to take positions at \$8 a week in 1931 and 1932.

We convinced Father to go to Holland in 1932 and gave him \$300 toward the trip. My brother and his wife, now with two daughters, gave up their vacation week in Canada and added another \$50. Grandmother was no longer alive, but Father had a grand reunion with his two brothers and sister and their families, as well as with the Elberts, my mother's family. He reported hearing Hitler-like speeches in Germany. He never wanted to go back to Holland again after his retirement, for he was afraid to see what World War II had done.

My in-laws, Pa and Moe (pronounced Moo) Bos and sister-in-law Jacoba, who had been in Indonesia when we were on our honeymoon, visited us in 1934 for five months. We had just rented a very nice two-story house in Tonawanda. For Moe's sixty-fifth birthday we had a dinner party for twenty-one of the Bos family from the Buffalo area, Jacob and Reni Bos from Hammond, Indiana, and Koos and Annie Vis (Koos's mother was a Bos) from Detroit. We used our Gilkie trailer, with a double bed on each side, as extra sleeping quarters. Pictures were taken of the brothers, Peter, my father-in-law, John and Jacob with their sister, Grietje Bos Mensonides; of the three cousins, all named Jacoba; of the five couples all named Mr. and Mrs. Bos; and group pictures. It was a lovely occasion.

Moe was dressed in a long, light purple gown with a corsage and we called her "the Queen." She began a little speech with "Waarde Broeders and Zusters" (Dearest brothers and sisters). She thanked us all for the attention being paid to her. She pointed out the lovely "taart" cake I had made and placed on a circular board into which my husband had drilled sixty-four holes for candles. We placed a large candle on top of the cake. (She had seen her son working on the board, but he told her it was to hold drills.)

Since Moe had married Peter, the oldest of ten children, everyone in the family looked to them for help and comfort, especially Grietje, the youngest, who died in May 1975, at the age of seventy-eight.

Moe and Pa visited Rochester for two weeks as the guests of my parents. They also visited the Hagedoorns in Paterson, New Jersey. We took them to a cottage on the St. Lawrence River in Clayton, New York, for a week, to Niagara Falls, camping in our trailer in Allegheny State Park near Bradford, Pennsylvania, and for the usual dinners, teas, and lunches with the many relatives who lived in the area at that time. After Pa and Moe left, my husband's oldest sister Co (Jacoba), who was then 42, stayed with us for the rest of the year. I taught and Co kept house. She mended and made clothes for herself and me. She used to sit at the treadle machine with a huge jardiniere on the floor to the right of her for an ashtray. She was immaculate, even tempered, intelligent, and pleasant.

Our good friends, Ruth and Nickie Vorie, lived across from us. Ruth's mother died while my in-laws were with us. Moe could not speak English but would walk with Ruth, just holding her hand and giving her comfort. Co, who could speak English, and Ruth were good company for each other.

In May, 1935, we took Co to her boat, leaving from Hoboken, stopping over for the night in Wyalusing, Pennsylvania. Exactly nine months later, on February 12, 1936, our first son was born. We named him J. Henry after my brother, but he was always called Johnnie, John, or J.H.

My father was living with us at the time. Unable to get any work in Rochester, he had come to Tonawanda at John's suggestion, and worked for the Curtis-Wright Airplane Company near us. My stepmother remained in the Rochester house and Father went home about every six weeks.

I was very fortunate in having Dr. Jennie Harris, affectionately called Dr. Jennie, because her father also was Dr. Harris. She was a pediatrician and obstetrician, and had her office and a five-bed maternity hospital in her large home in Tonawanda. She pioneered in the natural childbirth method and allowed fathers to be present throughout the delivery, somewhat unusual even today. If there was any problem with an expected delivery, however, Dr. Jennie sent the mother to a hospital in Buffalo, where she was on the staff. Dr. Jennie died in August, 1965, at age 78. In her fifty-five years of practice, she delivered five thousand babies.

On New Year's Eve, 1937, we moved to Rochester, where John began as assistant foreman in the Electrical Division of the Eastman Kodak Company at Kodak Park. Father boarded with some people near Curtis. Later that year we bought our first home, a single story, two-bedroom house (with room for expansion on the upper floor) at 1057 Pixley Road. It was in a part of Rochester that was then called Coldwater—Father's joke was that we could take a hot bath in Coldwater. There we had a tremendous garden and grew potatoes, corn, Brussels sprouts, kale, and luscious strawberries. It became one of the largest Victory gardens in the neighborhood during World War II.

The year 1938 was a sad one because of several deaths. We lost my younger brother George, aged 27, in an automobile accident on May 7. He was a tobacco salesman and his hobby was golf. Father always treasured the article on the Sports page of the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle written by Jack Tucker:

Sudden death of George (Junior) Elferink, who was buried yesterday, came as a severe shock to every golfer in town who knew the the big, good-natured kid. The news took the edge off Sunday play at Locust Hill in particular, where the flag went at half-staff and members gloomed in the locker room. Elferink, a slugger with the forearms and wrists of a blacksmith, showed real golfing promise. He was a bit wild off the tees, but brother, how he could wallop that little agate. The finest thing about George's many swell qualities was that he seldom, if ever, got mad. A great disposition, a sense of humor, a capacity for making a flock of friends and a cleancut mind—that was George Elferink.

Our second son, George Peter, was born on May 30, just three weeks after my brother's death. It was difficult to call him "George," so we called him Baby or G.P. (Peter later had his name legally changed from George Peter to Peter George.) We were happy when my brother Henk's only son was named George Henry; he is the only one to carry on the Elferink name.

Then on June 25, 1938 we received a cable from Holland informing us that my father-in-law, 68, had died. How difficult not to be able to take part in a memorial service for one's father! I remember well how Henk brought some shrubbery for John to plant and silently they worked side by side. My remarkable mother-in-law at 69 asked her son to send a farewell cable when she knew the end was near. When the message was received, she placed her hand on the latest snapshot of our little family, saying, "Het is goed zoo" (It's all right now) and slept away with her three daughters at her bedside on October 4, 1938.

With my husband attending night school at Mechanics Institute (now called Rochester Institute of Technology), I began teaching night school again when Peter was three months old. It was good to get out into another world, and the extra money came in handy.

Charles Anthony was born almost two years to the day after Peter, on June 1, 1940. For the births of both Peter and Charles, I went back to Dr. Jennie in Tonawanda, 80 miles from Rochester. John always made it in time to see them born—each time in the same room with the same nurse, Mrs. Crowson; the same cook, Emma; and capable, gentle, lovable Dr. Jennie.

When Charles was two, during World War II, jobs were frozen. Kodak was not expanding or able to put in new electrical work, so John was loaned for six months to the Austin Company of Cleveland as electrical field engineer for the construction of their Diamond Magnesium plant in Painesville, Ohio. We rented a cottage on Lake Erie at Madison, Ohio, in June, 1942. John worked six days a week and we managed to get caught up financially.

After a brief return to the Eastman Kodak Company we moved to Mentor, Ohio, twenty miles east of Cleveland, in 1944. John became a permanent employee of the Austin Company in Cleveland, as electrical engineer. By passing an examination in 1945, he obtained his professional electrical engineer's certification in Ohio.



Bos Family 1944

We had moved eight times in fourteen years: Kenmore, Buffalo, Tonawanda, Eggertsville, Sheffield Road, Rochester, with a six-month break in Madison, Ohio; now we sold our home on Pixley Road, and for a year we rented a house on Case Avenue, Mentor. Then we bought our second house, at 7945 Stockbridge Road, and moved in when our daughter Winifred Jo (born on July 10, 1945) was only two weeks old. Having a daughter, after three sons, we were ecstatic and sent the following message on penny post cards:

Weight: 6 lbs., 13½ ozs.
In Painesville, Ohio
Nineteen 45, July 10, 4:30 AM
In Lake County Hospital
First daughter, fourth child
Restrictions on visitors, so
Expect much mail from
Day to day (from you?)

John and Jenny Bos
Overjoyed Of course
So are the boys



Winifred, Aged 3

While living in that house, all the children were graduated from elementary and high school, left for college, and were married. There on Stockbridge Road, in our togetherness, we lived, laughed and cried. It held the best of times and the worst of times.

It is fortunate, say my sons, that Grampa lived with us for a while. My stepmother died in 1947. By 1948 Father had sold his house in Rochester and moved to Mentor to live with us. He had a large pine-panelled room added to our Stockbridge Road house with a large picture window, four narrower ones, and a built-in bookcase. I anticipated hardships on both sides. He was no longer used to living with children, but he could be quiet in his own room. I did not want him to discipline my children when I was around because I did not want them to think of him as a crabby old man. And they never did, though at times it was hard for him not to make comments about their behavior. As the boys grew up, we often played pinochle: they became noisy, yet it was their home. I was the buffer between Grampa and them, but Wini was the apple of Grampa's eye. For the last eight years of his life, he was surrounded by love. He was listened to by his grandchildren and the many friends who went straight to his bed-living room for a chat whenever they visited us.

With no pension of any kind, his only income was Social Security, amounting to \$50 a month. He paid me \$5 a week, but he was always so helpful, especially in the preparation of dinner after I began teaching, that I told him we should really have paid him. From the \$10,000 he received for his house, he built his room, took a three-month vacation in Florida, boarding with his old friends, the Rysewyks, and spent a long summer in California, going by train. He stopped at Grand Canyon, visited Yosemite, and came home by way of the Rockies.

When the boys were 14, 12, and 10 years old, my husband's sister Johanna, a retired nurse in Holland, came for a very lengthy visit, against my better judgment. At that time, money was frozen in Holland: Dutch citizens visiting a foreign country could take only \$25 with them. It was really a financial hardship for us to add another mouth at the table, hence my opposition. Jo did not realize it at the time, but more than made up for it when my daughter and I visited her in 1959.

We had the usual joys and hardships parents encounter in bringing up children, but unless one keeps a diary, much is forgotten. However, we have many family anecdotes about honors or bad behavior or hilarious happenings. My children learned to do their share of household chores. In addition, the boys worked during summers, mainly caddying at nearby Kirtland Country Club.

Their Grampa shared their activities by listening to them and encouraging them. He was proud of Charles when he won a kite-flying contest, and remarked how carefully Charles made his kite, practiced flying it, and wound the string on a smooth little board Grampa had made. John, on the other hand, did not always prepare projects until the last minute. I recall Grampa hovering over the basement workbench on John's Roman banquet scene, a project to make up for a bad mark in Latin. How proud Grampa was when Pete, exhausted but persevering, would want me to "hear" words for an upcoming spelling contest. (I remember dictating the words as I rolled out pie crust.) At one point, Grampa went on the school bus with the Mentor High band for a contest in Columbus, Ohio. "Guess what boys squirted me with their water guns?" he would say to our friends, and then he'd laugh. "My own grandsons!"



Gradus with Peter, John, and Charles

In 1952 we bought our first television set, a Sylvania, as a present to Grampa. According to a tradition we still keep, the last present at Christmas has a little gift card, or poem, stuck on the Christmas tree, with a string leading from it to the gift. The string never goes directly to the gift but under rugs, over doorways, and one may not break the string but must follow it to the gift itself. (In this case, we had moved the rather large TV from the neighbors', where it had been delivered, to our front vestibule.) The jingle read:

In '52 we had a great occasion
Elected a president of our great nation
We couldn't be there to see all the excitement
But the radio gave us many a moment.
This sort of thing is all part of our American tradition
Just the same as football and baseball competition.
Plays, comics, debates, labor-management strife,
Are all part of our American way of life.
Yes, radio may include instructions for camping and fishing
And most of it makes very interesting listening.
But now modern science has found a solution
So oldsters like you can avoid all confusion
And follow events in an easy chair.
No doubt there'll be others with whom you'll share
But, Dad, it's foremost for you, this TV
For Christmas and because you're soon eighty.

Though Grampa had never participated in sports of any kind, he loved to watch boxing matches, which his friend, Dirk Van Hattem, also a pacifist, visiting from Holland, could not understand. He became a Cleveland Indians baseball fan, and he and Peter made an elaborate score sheet, which I mimeographed. Grampa used to watch and keep score of two games in a row, when there were double-headers. He would slip the score sheet under the door between his room and our kitchen for Peter to see first thing in the morning. Peter says to this day he has remembered many details and players from those years. In his last few years, Grampa would score only one game, and then turn the TV around to watch the second from his bed.

He attended many of the high school plays and band concerts, and saw John and Peter graduate. The principal remarked at Peter's graduation, "Mr.

Elferink is getting older; he seems a little bent over." Grampa was proud because both boys sang the solo line, "The captains and the kings depart," in the graduation hymn.

One summer, son John, who was then sixteen years old, worked at the Rabbit Run Theatre, setting up tables and umbrellas—in fact "doing all the dirty work" as he said. That was his first theater job. During the intermission of a performance of The Rope, in which John played a very minor role, Grampa said loudly to me, "Aren't you prond of your son?" so that people around us could hear it—much to my embarrassment.

My husband had been doing some engineering in addition to his work at the Austin Company. Gradually John Bos and Associates, a consulting engineering firm that still exists under another name, came into being. I personally felt that John would not delegate responsibility to others and did too much himself. He worked too hard and quite unexpectedly, in 1951, it became apparent that he was having a nervous breakdown. The first four months of that year was a difficult time for me as the children were very lively and Grampa was in Florida. The doctors advised John to relinquish the idea of being in business for himself, and so he went to work for Hatfield Electric Company, where he remained until his death in 1958.

Just about the time John had the breakdown, I decided that we could not educate four children on one salary. The Superintendent of the Mentor Schools was reluctant to hire me as a business teacher even though I had passed a special state examination for certification in typing and shorthand. The Superintendent pointed out that if I retrained for elementary teaching, I would be set for life. So, in 1952, I took two courses at Kent State that would enable me to teach reading and arithmetic. Finally I accumulated 153 credits, enough for the Bachelors—15 (advanced) salary schedule, which increased my teacher's pension. With Grampa and J.H. to run the household, I decided to stay in Kent during the week. When my dear husband came to see me on the first Wednesday, he feared I was homesick. By Saturday when I went home for the weekend, I had a virus and had to stay home in bed for a week. However, I returned for the last four weeks, still recuperating, and passed the courses satisfactorily.

When some of my friends scolded me about leaving my family, I became less confident about the idea of going to school. For the first and only time, I went to see a marriage counselor although I was afraid someone might see me going into the Office of Family Relations and assume that John and I had marital problems. The counselor's main advice was that J.H., who was not working that summer (he had quit as "grease monkey" in a garage after a very enthusiastic beginning) do a great share of the housework. Pete and Chuck were caddying. The counselor insisted on seeing my husband. John told me she convinced him that I had a right to try to work as long as we had help in the house. Then she suggested someone learn how to sort clothes and have the washing done by the time I got home on Saturday afternoon. During my time at Kent everyone gave Wini extra attention, though she never lacked for it from her Daddy or Grampa, but she missed me very much.

After substituting for three years, in 1953 I began teaching in the elementary school that the three boys had attended and where Wini was in third grade. I taught fifth and sixth grade English, spelling, and reading. In addition, I taught typing in the Adult Education night school, which I had been instrumental in introducing in Mentor. The Board of Education that first year would allow only teachers already in the system to teach night school. I taught the class because the regular business teachers would not teach in the evenings. The next year, however, many certified teachers from outside the system taught in Mentor and I did not have to teach the course. Adult education finally came under the supervision of the Board, so our committee had reached its goal.

In 1955, I went with Mildred Holt to Columbus for an Adult Education Conference. Wini, in the fourth grade then, had a temperature that Friday morning. Shortly after I left, Peter carried her over to our helpful neighbor, Jean Stewart, even though Grampa was there to care for her. I did not call home that Friday evening for I knew my husband would say: "She's fine" regardless of her condition. When Mildred and I returned the next day, I was greeted with: "How would you like to make a visit to the hospital?" That day, Wini had had an emergency appendectomy! Up to then, Wini had not missed a single day of school. Three years later, Jean Stewart was to perform another task, for which I am eternally grateful—she broke the news to Wini that her Daddy had had a heart attack. I could not have done it as calmly as she did.

What a help Grampa was when I taught! When my children do not impose on me to babysit for them, I am reminded that we did not impose on Grampa either. It was Peter's job to take Grampa's breakfast to him on a tray—always orange juice, cornflakes plus bran, and tea—for I had told Grampa, "You must stay in bed until after the children have gone to school or you'll be exhausted by eight in the morning." Sometimes I had the boys in different rooms, practicing on piano or coronet, for a while, or ohoe for twenty minutes before school. But when I taught, the dishes were done and drying in the rack before we left for school

Grampa cleaned his own room until two weeks before he went to the hospital. As Peter and I were cleaning and dusting his room and he was sitting up in bed, he said, tongue in cheek, "That's what I like—I should have thought of this a long time ago." He made coffee at 10:30, according to the Dutch custom, with lunch and tea in the afternoon on Fridays when the cleaning lady came. He would ask me in the morning if I needed anything done in the way of food preparation: should he peel some apples so I could make a pie or two? (The Christmas after he died, my husband bought me an apple peeler, which I use to this day.) How thin Grampa peeled the potatoes with a paring knife. I was taught to peel potatoes in this old-fashioned way too, and I never have learned to use a peeler except for carrots. He enjoyed nothing more than helping me preserve food. Again, how thin he peeled pears. The children helped too, and I had 300 bail-type Ball jars to give away before I moved to Virginia. With a return to canning in 1974, my daughter-in-law and daughter wish they had more of them! Father kept John's workbench immaculate, watered my houseplants, and did many other little chores; but mostly he read, wrote, and watched television. He was seldom lonely, he said, probably because his mind was so active and remained curious about everything. The children consulted him when they were writing theses, often asking for subject matter. He entertained them with stories of his youth and mine, and he loved to talk in his dialect with my husband, recalling stories and jokes.

He could not abide my looking cross at my husband, but he often remarked how I could appear in the morning fresh, happy and peppy after a particularly fatiguing day. He didn't realize that we had the quality in common; both of us were early-morning people. My stepmother was quiet in the morning and so was my husband. Since Father did not get up with the rest of us, he

would read for a while. Then, before getting up, he would say, "Listen to this a minute," and quote from whatever he was reading. Sometimes I was impatient, but this was how I found out he read Goethe's Faust in German, Dutch, and English.

Although my father was liberal in his beliefs, and understanding of some of the newer morality, he was puritanical as an individual. Still, it was his liberal thinking I remembered when the book Open Marriage came out a few years ago. Father had approved of Judge Ben Lindsay's The Companionate Marriage. Judge Lindsay had seen so much parent-teenage misunderstanding that he proposed that high school students who were in love should be allowed to marry and at the end of two years, if they were not compatible and there were no children, be allowed to dissolve the marriage before a judge. This idea may still be valid and workable! After my stepmother had made some critical comments about Richard's bride-to-be being a Catholic, Father told Richard that if he loved Clarice, they could conquer all else—and they have.

Father missed his card-playing Rochester friends and, since he did not own a car or drive, this presented a problem to us. However, he was such good company, that we took him many places. He took the Great Books Course with us for one year, but became dissatisfied because somehow the discussion went astray and did not stick to St. Paul of Aquinas or whatever we had read that week. For the next two years, as my husband and I continued the course, Father would read the assignment and then we three would discuss it together.

In 1947, we were shocked to hear that Thoni, my husband's nephew and the only child of Riek and Johan, had died of a heart attack. We offered to let Peter, who was the most demonstrative in his affections, go to Holland for a year, but my sister-in-law wrote honestly that she could not bear the thought of having to part with him at the end of the year. Some time later, at our festive Thanksgiving dinner, Charles asked why he couldn't go to Holland some time. We asked him if he wouldn't miss the holidays at home, and when we repeated the question at Christmas, he still seemed anxious to go. We made the necessary arrangements.

In July, 1954, Charles, aged 14, sailed for Holland to spend his freshman year of high school in his father's home town, Hengelo. He boarded with my cousin Jo Wassink and her husband for \$8 (about 32 guilders) a week, which

was approximately what it cost us to feed him. Their only son was in his first year at the University of Utrecht and so they welcomed Charles, who had only about fifty Dutch words in his vocabulary. Cousin Jo, who knew English, was of incalculable help to him in his studies at the gymnasium, which prepared pupils for college. Charles would not have been accepted in the gymnasium had he not been at the top of his eighth-grade class.

Grampa just lived every minute of Chuck's visit in his imagination and memory. Chuck became known as a very "ijverig" (ambitious) and handy young man. Jo was amazed at his abilities, as when he dragged a bicycle from a canal and put it into excellent working condition. He never could get used to dressing up on Sundays and sitting around all day. He was used to going to church, changing into casual clothes, and working around the house.

All but his mathematics teacher spoke English, and Chuck was learning Latin and French through Dutch. The mathematics teacher would compliment him on a correct paper and say: "Beautiful, Charles." And so he became known as Beautiful Charles to his classmates.

Although he lived with my cousin, his visit to the aunts (my husband's three sisters) during school vacations meant a great deal to him and to them. While Thoni's mother, Riek, has written very little over the past forty-five years, she wrote emphatically and beautifully upon Chuck's arrival:

This is a report on the arrival of your son and our nephew in Holland, July 31, 1954. It is five o'clock in the morning; Co and Johan are eating their breakfast and will leave for Rotterdam in about fifteen minutes as the boat is coming in early.

There, they are gone. Jo and I are decorating the house. The American and Dutch flags fly from Charles' bedroom window. Everywhere we have placed roses, lathyrus and anjers (carnations). On the windowsills we have purple primulas with green nephrolepis in between. In the center of our round table where we usually sit, there is a huge tart with "Welcome" on it, along with lemonade and the coffee things. Your wedding picture is right above the table with small American and Dutch flags. The upper part of our house-door is open and one can see all the gorgeous flowers in the garden.

Charles will sleep in a large, but cozy, front bedroom on a green-covered divan bed. The cretonne curtains have rose-colored lining. It is pretty and is our only guest room. Further, there is a bookcase, radio, which Thoni put together, sink, large table with writing equipment so that he can sit there quietly if he so desires.

The aunts (John's sisters, Jacoba, Johanna, and Riek) have dressed themselves gaily so that they will create a youthful impression and not frighten him.

The flags wave merrily and today the sun is shining after a month of cold and rain. It is now eleven o'clock and they are just coming in the garden gate. What a tall boy! What a darling boy!

John, my oldest son, is the only one who never visited our relatives in Holland. Peter made several visits on Navy flights when he attended the Naval Academy and spent 1970-1972 in Amsterdam as a consultant for McKinsey and Company. He wrote me, wanting to know why his father had come to the States, did I know his father had gone to a technical college, and did I realize Grampa might have been in Parliament had he stayed in Holland.

Charles visited the towns where his father went to high school and where his grandfather had been born and worked, and learned the difference between the European and American cultures. He realized that I usually cooked Dutch—small portions of meat, usually boiled potatoes, and a large serving of vegetables—and added to it American desserts, such as pie and cake. In Holland, puddings and fruit were served. He discovered why I always had a coffee break—now more common in the United States, too!—in the morning, and tea in the afternoon.

My husband always said we should keep the best customs of both countries. He never liked mugs and, sadly, shortly after his death we found a cup and saucer on his circular saw, another on the workbench, and a third in the garage attic. It brought to mind the Dutch word, "gezelligheid," which means something like "coziness" in English and meant "time out for tea or coffee."

The visits we made to Holland have kept the family interested in what happens to the relatives there.

Both Grampa and my husband were patriotic and sincerely fond of their adopted country. Charles knew so little Dutch when he arrived in Holland because my husband did not approve of speaking Dutch in the home. To this day, however, there are Dutch words in the children's vocabularies that were every-day expressions, such as stoffer en blik, "brush and dustpan" (not "dustpan and brush"), vaatdoek (vaadoek) "dishcloth;" doodmoe "dead tired," and the amusing (to us) dag hoor for "Bye now."

Grampa and my husband loved the patriotic songs, The Battle Hymn of the Republic and God Bless America, as well as many others. We always had a songbook in the glove compartment of our automobile so that we could sing all the verses of our American songs, such as My Old Kentucky Home, Juanita, and others. We sang one "uke" song after another, and I still sing them with my grandchildren—Pull Your Shades Down Maryann, Speak to Me, Darling, Oh, Speaky, Spikey, Spokey, and many others.

Respect for one's country means respect for people. The children were not allowed to say "He's nuts!" or "I can't stand him" about a teacher. My husband made John say a respectful good-bye to our neighbors and the teachers he particularly liked before he left for his first year of college. For Grampa, it also meant respect for education. For my husband, it pointed out the seriousness, politeness, and sincerity of most Europeans, especially the Dutch.

My husband had graduated from a three-year technical college in Holland, and at one time we considered his getting a degree at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York. Everyone he worked for advised him not to bother because, with his vast practical experience, he didn't need it. Instead, I became a night school "widow" for eighteen years. He took innumerable courses; English and public speaking, because in the beginning he felt somewhat sensitive about his own delightful accent and had difficulty with the "th's", and electrical measurements, management, industrial planning, industrial electronics, lighting design and business letters for his own professional improvement. He was taking speed reading at the time of his death.

John was a do-it-yourself man as well. He put in a cement floor for our fruit cellar, and built a huge cement-block garage and the most beautiful enlarged kitchen with custom-made doors which he finished the day before he

died. And always—whether it was working on a project or in the shower—he sang. He enjoyed singing in the choir in the Methodist Church to which we belonged for a number of years. One year, proudly, I sat by myself and heard John, J.H., and Peter sing in the choir together.

Tritely, I say, there was never a dull moment in the Bos household. In September, 1955, J.H. was in his third year at Carnegie Technical Institute (now Carnegie-Mellon) as a drama student. Peter was a freshman there, enrolled in the engineering course. He had received \$1,000 in scholarships: \$300 from the local Mentor Woman's Club, \$350 from the caddy foundation (Peter had caddied for seven years at Kirtland Country Club), and a \$350 basketball scholarship.

In September, Grampa went on a camping weekend with my husband and me, Charles, Wini, and a girlfriend. He had his own tent and laughingly told us he could get down on the rubber mattress okay, but he had to get up on all fours. He caught cold, which turned into pneumonia.

For two weekends, J.H. and Pete came home and my brother came from Rochester. The second weekend Father said, "Farewell party, huh?", but no, we thought he would recover. He had had very few illnesses during his whole life, but his heart became weaker and weaker and we moved him to the hospital. I was called from school on a Thursday two weeks later. The end was near. I took his hand under the oxygen tent, and he said weakly, "Sunset and evening star and one clear call for me." I was silent. He said, "Go on, say it." I choked through another verse. On the following Saturday, John and I visited him in the afternoon and evening. At eleven o'clock, my very sympathetic husband asked, "Would you like me to see Pa once more?" I nodded. What a son-in-law he was! At four the next morning, the telephone rang, and we knew our father, grandfather, and understanding friend was gone forever.

My brother had seen him both weekends and had told him in a letter of the cottage he hoped to buy at Seely's Bay in Canada, and how he would take Dad fishing there. The asking price was \$4,000 but, since many repairs were needed, he thought he could purchase it for \$2,000. On his last visit, Henk told him what he paid for the cottage. Father said hoarsely, "Too much!" How we wished he could see what a lovely place that cottage is on the high point of a peninsula where my brother spent the last few summers of his life.

Peter had told Father during his illness he had been accepted at the Naval Academy. Father told him: "Do your best. I was only a Sergeant. You can become an Admiral!"

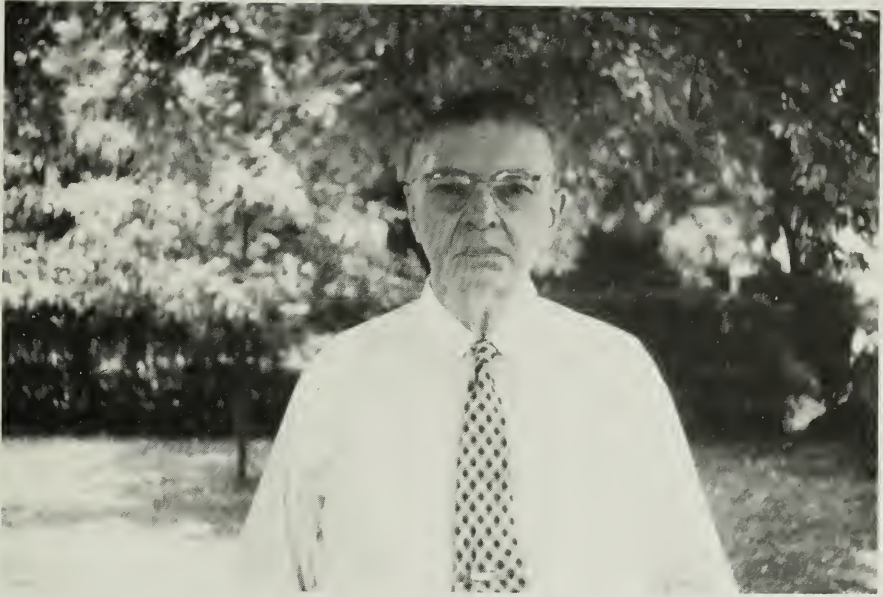
Whenever it was possible my brother came to visit Father in Mentor to congratulate him personally on his birthday. They would read together, talk together and chuckle together and always pictures were taken, so precious to us now. How glad we were that we had had such a grand surprise party for Father in his beloved Rochester on his eightieth birthday two years before. Just before dinner at my brother's house, we told him about the surprise. My sister-in-law handed Father a heap of letters from his brothers, sister, and friends in Holland and from people who would be unable to attend the party. Our children were then 17, 15, 13, and 8 years old. How exciting it was for them, as well as for Father, when the guests—a hundred strong—sang "Happy Birthday." There were comments from Teddy Van Beenen, a long-time friend, David Rhys Williams with his original poem "The Spirit of Youth," and a biography of Father by my husband. My brother made up a picture album, which Father treasured and perused over and over again. My children were awestruck when, impromptu, their grandfather made his comments, part of which he later recalled in a letter to his former neighbors:

Dr. Williams made a poem especially for me. In my answer, I recited a poem by a Flemish poet, Rene de Clereq. It sounds so musical though not as good in translation. It refers to my son-in-law.

I got from my parents
Each a part
From Father my shoulders
From Mother my heart.

Also in regard to my dreams, I quoted from a jingle I had made in 1938, after fishing with the VandenBergs:

Then fantastic dreams are ringing
Of a new society
Of which millions are singing
A wondrous melody.



Gradus at 80

After the speeches, I had Father sit at one end of the hall where guests could visit with him one by one after taking refreshments from a table presided over by Lucy Van Beenen and my older step-sister, Cora Jongedyk. The guests mingled with each other and many commented on how much they enjoyed seeing old friends and what a fine idea it was to get together when one is alive. It was especially wonderful, because at Father's memorial service only his friends and acquaintances of the last eight years in Mentor were able to join the family. Father would have approved of the solo "Crossing the Bar" sung by Frank Henck, the music teacher at Mentor High under whom all four grandchildren participated in the glee club or choir.

All the words, the wisdom he had often expressed, now helped to bolster us. In a letter he wrote to his Rochester neighbors, after my stepmother died, he said:

Your expression of sympathy went with Mother to her last resting place. You must know how much the children and I appreciate those flowers.

The great men of science and especially of literature live on forever. We enjoy using the things they created with their brains. In times of sorrow we turn to poets and others who had the gift of expressing themselves. As those great men live on forever, those we loved live on within us as long as we breathe. They speak to us through their work, their sayings, their care, their whole life. In our lonely hours, we see their smiles and we regret the harsh words spoken when we were angry. We feel how mediocre we are compared with all we can see around and above us. We feel like a little grain of dust in this great universe, of which we know so little ... But the birds sing their song ... Time marches on!

Now, with Father gone and J.H. and Peter at school, there were only four at our table. We looked forward to vacations when the boys would be with us for a few days. For our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, Charles, Wini, my husband, and I drove to Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, to celebrate the occasion by just being together. John and I later spent a week in Florida during my Easter vacation from school.

As Father had said, "Time marches on!" Our oldest son, John, was graduated in Fine Arts from Carnegie Tech in 1957. Even before the graduation exercises, he was working at the Music Tent in Cohasset, Massachusetts, as stage manager. Although we had seen many activities, particularly plays, in which J.H. had taken part, my husband felt very bad that he could not see his son graduate. With his high regard for formal education, he considered it almost disrespectful not to attend the final exercises.

We had enjoyed Parents' Weekend together at the Naval Academy when Peter was a Plebe. We had seen the crew races in Syracuse, when Pete's Plebe team won the national championship. At that time my husband told the athletic instructor, Russell (Rusty) Callow, "We approve of the discipline at the Academy." "Mr. Bos," said Rusty, "your son was disciplined before he came to us."

With Charles a senior in high school and Wini in the seventh grade, we had come to the decision that we could afford to send Charles to college without my working and I was planning to resign in June. However, that was not to be.

Suddenly and shockingly, in March, 1958, my husband, my Rock of Gibraltar, died prematurely of a heart attack. He was fifty-seven years old. I wrote to my friends: "Although it seems impossible to me at this moment, I know I can carry on." I never knew how difficult it would be. After seventeen years, I know it was possible only with the help of many, many friends, but particularly because my children made a healthy adjustment possible and worthwhile.

Just a month before his death, I had a tremendous lead—probably the greatest role I have ever played—Mrs. Livingston Baldwin Crane in Ladies of the Jury, sponsored by the Mentor Women's Club. Charles and Wini were particularly helpful during the six weeks of rehearsal. Since John was working on my kitchen at that time, he did not mind my going out so many evenings. J.H. was working at the Shakespearwrights in New York at the time. He came home for his twenty-second birthday with his friend Ronny Brown. Before the Saturday night performance, J.H., his girlfriend, Sally Lindsay from Pittsburgh, Charles, his high school friend, Joan, and Elsie from John's office were with us for dinner. I ate, but left early to be made up. Right after the performance, John, Elsie, and Wini hurried to put the food out. John made the coffee before all the guests arrived. All but Peter, who had been home at Christmas time, were together that evening. What a jolly time we had! How I have missed John's comments, good or bad, on my acting. No matter what friends may say, when I perform, my family's opinions mean the most.

My father was the greatest influence in my life, but deeply engraved in my very being, my heart, is my love, my husband of twenty-seven years, father of my three stalwart sons and my dearest and only daughter. John had not often been away from home on business, but on one occasion I remarked to him that he only carried the pictures of the children in his billfold. "Yes," he said, "you are in my heart, You'll always be there. Remember that!"

I find it difficult to describe him. Why? I think it is because so many of the memories are so very intimate. They belong only to me and I hesitate to share them. It was the way he looked at me with love, with surprise, with astonishment, with approval, with disappointment, with anger, with caution; his caresses so gentle, his lovemaking so meaningful and considerate. All of these

attributes became known to me over those twenty-seven years. Let no one imagine that everything went smoothly! But our maturity and past experiences (we were thirty and twenty-six when we married) certainly must have helped, as I look back.

Besides being a cigarette smoker, which I feel shortened his life, John's fault was that he was a perfectionist. He never accepted the fact that it was necessary to skip over some things. When he painted our house on Pixley Road, he insisted on removing all the hardware on which the awnings were mounted. He scraped and scraped and sanded before he repainted our first car, a Ford roadster. He bought excellent soil for the lawn of our first house, which we rented. He wasn't happy about the way the putty did not quite match the pine in my beautiful kitchen. Afterwards, I loved those spots just because it made me think of his perfect work.

He only relaxed when we stopped for tea or coffee. Holidays were the only days when he did nothing extra, except, perhaps, to help me stuff the turkey. Camping meant relaxation too. That was the only time he ever skipped shaving!

After his death, my children could not possibly have been the help to me that they were if he had not had a great hand in bringing them up. He stressed to them the necessity of a philosophy of life. He seemed to have examples to illustrate all of the points to the boys, and often I accused him of making up the stories. One true story he told was about the time he had been given his first jack-knife with a fancy handle. He misused it and his father took a hammer, smashed it before his eyes, and then told him when he was old enough to use one, he could earn another. (Those were the days boys could still carry knives to school!)

John was orderly and neat. He taught the boys to put their clothes on the three-tiered shelf he had made. He was the one who said, "I think you boys are old enough now to make your beds before you go to school." And that was before I went to teaching. He was conservative about the way I dressed. Anything blue was perfect. He did not like me to wear my fox furs or a corsage to church at Easter time. "What did you go for?" he asked.

He was the only one in the family who never acted on stage, but he always supported the rest of us. Being a lighting engineer, he became very interested in that phase of theater after J.H. did the lighting at Rabbit Run one summer. At

the end of J.H.'s first year in Drama, he was advised to go into the technical side of theater. The head of the Drama Department told us what an outstanding job J.H. had done on a steam shovel for Maxwell Anderson's *High Tor*. J.H. said, "Well, Dad, you know, it was easy because you always allowed us to make things in the basement and you had so many tools." I remember when the principal went around to register the first graders, he saw J.H., at five, tightening the screw on a loose door handle. He remarked, the boy had mechanical ability.

My husband was a handsome, healthy-looking six feet four inches tall. He had beautiful brown eyes, black hair with some gray in it, rather bushy eyebrows, and a fine mouth and lips. He always found it easy to maintain an even weight. But his pleasant, even disposition, his sincerity, and his patience meant the most to me. He was lenient and forgiving with his sons, remembering his own boyhood, but he believed in respect and discipline. He used the razor strap on a few occasions that have never been forgotten. He was very precise about children's table manners. He tucked our daughter in, and they had their own way of expressing gratefulness for the day before she went to sleep. Wini was very sensitive even to a raised voice.

My kitchen shelves were made at just the right height for goblets and sherbets. (John was always helpful in the kitchen when it was necessary.) He was always on the lookout for labor-saving devices and gadgets. When we bought our first washing machine, just before his parents spent the summer with us, he immediately insisted on buying a mangle too. If for no other reason but to make life easier for me, he wanted to earn more money. It was difficult to convince him that I wanted to go back to work.

Just before his death he was working on a mechanism to reduce industrial lighting fixture maintenance and replacement costs. It provided for the mechanical mounting and electrical connection of fluorescent lighting fixtures and lamps without the erection of special scaffolding or other temporary equipment and without the interruption of electrical power. Patent applications had been made. He told me, "If I am able to make a great deal of money with this, we must not spoil the boys. They have to learn the value of money." The word "scrupulous" often comes to our minds, for the boys were frowned upon at the mere mention of anything that was not entirely on the up-and-up. He would not allow John to join DeMolay when, on initiation night, some of the boys let the air out of auto tires, even though he knew from his own experience that boys

will be boys. He did not approve of the boys calling from college and asking for themselves, just to let us know that they had arrived safely, to save the price of a telephone call. He said to J.H., when he left for his first year at college, that if after four hours we didn't hear anything, we would know they had arrived safely.

He was loyal and very reserved until you got to know him. In the Dutch way, he never got used to calling people by their first names right away, as most Americans do. Yet he surprised me when he called the Mentor Superintendent of Schools, "Dale." No one else did. He explained, "But he's in the Rotary Club with me." He always loved dogs and we had had several. He was sentimental and gentle, but could speak up forcefully at meetings, whether it was the PTC, the School Board, a community affair or a church meeting. He became a Republican, while I remained a Democrat and Father a Socialist. He became religious as we attended the Methodist Church, but still did not take part in many of the rituals. During his breakdown, he was particularly helped by reading the Bible as well as religious booklets. He liked Peter Marshall's books.

As I said before, my husband carried pictures of our children in his billfold. He also had several clippings including the following, with no author given:

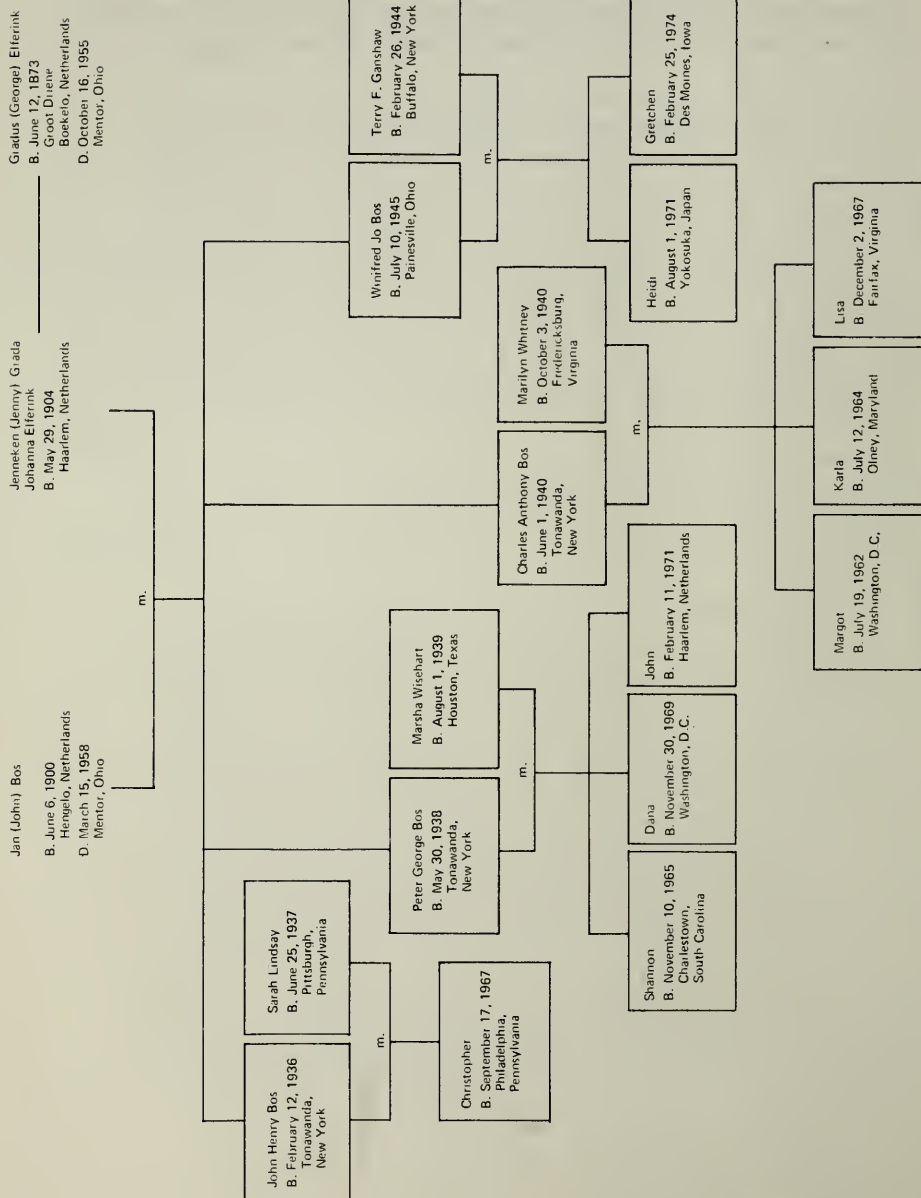
THEIR HERITAGE — I hope to leave a heritage ... To
my dear children three ... A heritage of faith and trust ...
And love and loyalty ... A heritage of faith in God ...
And trust in other souls ... Of love for all, and loyalty ...
To all our country's goals ... I pray that they will have
the strength ... And courage to go on ... However dark
and long the night ... However dim the dawn ... This is
the only heritage. Of which I am concerned ... That they
may grow and profit by ... The lessons I have learned ...
Then if I die in poverty ... And leave them not a cent ...
I still will feel my time on earth ... Was well and richly
spent.

My children and I know how well and richly he spent his time on earth.

I have never lived in the past and have had some very fine friendships with men, and my children would have been happy to see me with another companion, but I have always given the impression of being self-sufficient. Perhaps I am in some ways. Determination I have, but I have always needed more affection and could have blossomed anew with another love.

Chapter VI

GENEALOGY



The Roots Are Strong—The Tree Has Spread

The roots are strong in the Elferink-Bos family. I have tried to describe not only the strengths of the Dutchman from Driene, but also the continuing family strengths reinforced in his son-in-law, a man of surprisingly similar character—the father of the new generation.

Perhaps now it would not be amiss to tell of myself in the same way. I believe I have quite adequately described my life and family experiences. However, I have not given a complete picture of my personal characteristics, my desires, my hopes, and my achievements.

Like my husband, I feel it is necessary to have certain standards for one's life—call it a philosophy—and the determined discipline to live by these standards. But first of all, I must be sure for my own sake that I believe in those principles as I carry them out. The Golden Rule serves agnostic, Christian, or any other religion or philosophy. I have not found it difficult to do unto others what I would like others to do unto me. My conscience and sympathetic, understanding heart, developed along life's way with the influence of my father and husband, have enabled me to live by my philosophy.

My driving energy is perhaps my greatest asset in carrying out my goals. Charles wrote in a high school paper in 1957, "A regular human dynamo, she seems to be never stopping from her work for a minute. Everything I do, Mother can do twice as fast, with her mind already preoccupied with something else."

My aim since my marriage has been to raise a truly loving family. In this, my husband concurred, and in all our efforts the family came first, perhaps, as I look back, neglecting some of our own desires.

When I left Mentor, a teacher, play director, and friend of many years was quoted in the newspaper as follows:

Jenny Bos had lead roles because she was good. She was always the first to learn her lines and she put so much energy into her work that she stimulated everyone else ... Jenny Bos is one of the most efficient people I know ... unlike many efficient people, though, she isn't officious. Jenny never neglects people, never neglected her husband and four children even when she was studying to go into teaching and taking on all kinds of jobs.

I was not a beautiful child, though my features were delicate. Looking at the pictures of my childhood, the girls with naturally curly hair always looked so attractive. My long medium brown hair combed straight back from the forehead, with a large hairbow, and my simple, clean clothes gave me at best an appearance of plain neatness.

As a child I was quick-tempered, I know. I couldn't sit still very long, and was apt to be bossy with playmates. When we played millinery shop, we gathered all sorts of grasses and wild flowers—Queen Anne's lace, buttercups, and daisies—and put them together in bunches. Then we trimmed wide-brimmed hats, and with hats and dress-ups played Mrs. Vanderbilt and Mrs. Astor (or Jones and Smith). What an imagination I had, people would tell me!

Clothes do help, unquestionably. Since I did not belong to a sorority in college, I needed a formal dress only occasionally, and, fortunately, I was always able to borrow one. My first really stylish clothes were a beige summer coat with fitch collar and two-toned beige-and-brown hat of soft woven straw that a girl friend allowed me to charge on her account just before graduation. Before that, I did feel very dressed up in my long blue serge suit and crepe de chine beaded blouse and my mustard-colored coat—that year, my sixteenth, mustard and periwinkle were the mode.

I felt beautiful in my pink lace georgette wedding gown with wide-brimmed pink leghorn hat. I wore pink at both Peter's and Wini's wedding! It accentuates my fair complexion. Although in the years when only flat-chested girls were considered beautiful, I did feel quite out of style, by middle age, with my slim hips and nicely-shaped legs, I began to feel rather attractive. I now keep my gray hair colored by applying Clairol "Frivolous Fawn." This helps me look younger and gives me confidence in trying out for plays—I just finished a role in Thurber's Carnival at seventy-one. I have been told often that I do not look my age, and truthfully, I am rather proud of it. My skin is still smooth although some wrinkles are beginning to appear around my mouth—surely from laughing!

As I once said in Silence is Strength, a humorous monologue, "What else does she have to show for herself besides her four children?" I have a great deal.

As a child I wanted to be a librarian. This was only, I think, to keep the books in order, for, as I have said, I am not a great reader, or, perhaps it was

seeing my father's books that gave me this ambition. But most of all, I am a born teacher. Father said I used to put on a half-apron and sit before his shaving mirror, ruler in hand, and chatter away, pretending to be a teacher. Little did I dream that some day, teaching typing, I would be banging my ruler on the desk to beat the rhythm for "a, s, d, f, g!" I remember telling The Little Red Hen to a group of children around me. I have always enjoyed teaching anyone anything! To this day, while I am not an excellent bridge player, I often hear, "But you know the rules. Tell us again."

I liked secretarial work and was successful at it. My business background has been helpful in organizational work, and even housework. To begin teaching at middle age, with practical motherhood as a basis, has its advantages, for one understands children and knows how to cope with them. Perhaps the children I touched in those years of teaching remember most the annual big night of the play in which every child participated. Putting on the plays was beyond the call of duty and very tiring, but gave me so much pleasure and satisfaction.

I feel proud of my children's accomplishments, but I also feel proud of my own. I feel honored when I meet a stranger in the supermarket, who says, "May I tell you that I thoroughly enjoyed your performance." In 1973, I was honored on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Mentor, Ohio, Branch of the American Association of University Women by having my name placed on a five hundred dollar Fellowship grant in recognition of my organization of the Mentor branch and my active participation in the branch's activities.

In rereading these words about myself, I see clearly the characteristics that were in my father—the Dutchman from Driene—and in his wife, my mother. These have given my life many strengths—and some weaknesses. The strengths, let me assure you, are dominant in the roots of our Bos-Elferink family tree! How grateful I was for these very strengths when I had to go forward alone—continuing to encourage my children as they went from college to professions and marriage.

At the time of my husband's death, our son John had graduated and was on his own; Peter had two more years at the Naval Academy; Charles was a senior in high school and Winifred in the seventh grade at junior high school. Charles was given a two-year, full-tuition scholarship at Oberlin, to be continued upon proof of good grades. The scholarship was continued and was a great financial help to me.

Our family spent the holidays together, carrying on our usual traditions, such as the Christmas Eve carol singing with our neighbors, the Stewarts, one year at our house, the next at theirs. This has now become a neighborhood sing, not necessarily on Christmas Eve. Sometimes we carried on in silence, rather sadly, remembering my husband with happy memories--the last Christmas when the tag for his record was tied to the tree, the time he demonstrated a Parker pen to me, forgetting there was ink in it!

Then came the truly first big event which would have given my husband so much happiness.

In June, 1960, Peter was academically rated in the first hundred of the seven hundred men graduating that year from the Naval Academy, and was privileged to walk across the stage to receive his diploma. According to their custom, the young men threw their hats in the air and Wini grabbed one. Peter hugged me and the tears came. How proud his father would have been! True--but when we cry, it is pity for ourselves because we miss our loved ones. That was the first of the family ceremonies for my children where my brother, Henk, and his wife were able to stand with me as next of kin. Peter's girlfriend, Marsha Wiseheart, was graduated from Smith the same weekend but was able to be with us for part of the three-day festivities. It was the first time I met her. The following weekend, she spent a few days in Mentor. That August Peter, Captain of the Navy Crew team, rowed in the Olympics in Rome. The team came in fifth, but he came home with many memories and mementos.

When Marsha left from the Cleveland airport, I told Wini, "If I could choose my two daughters-in-law this moment, I'd have it made." I was referring to Marsha and to Sally Lindsay, to whom John was pinned.

Visiting John in July of 1960, when he was Publicity Director at Pittsburgh Playhouse, we visited Sally and her mother to hear about their forthcoming marriage plans. "We're going to have a garden wedding at nine o'clock," said Sally. "Nine o'clock at night!" I gasped--and immediately realized the bride's family makes the wedding arrangements. On August 6, 1960, after three days of rain, the Lindsays had a most romantic setting by moonlight for their daughter's wedding in their very unusual garden. They live in what used to be an old carriage house. The wide cement driveway, almost the full length of the garden, was lined with huge tubs of daisies and lighted, wicker birdcage lanterns high up in the

trees. Halfway down the driveway, to the right, was the small swimming pool with artificial revolving waterlilies with lights. Opposite the swimming pool was a three-tiered cascading waterfall circled with greenery, which served as a background for the receiving line. In the rear of the garden, there was a gold-painted, latticed arbor with candle holders, which was the setting for the simple service, held in the presence of about fifty close friends and relatives standing in a semi-circle.

The taped music began. Wini and the bride's cousin lit the candles. Charles ushered me to my place. Mrs. Lindsay was ready. The bride, on her father's arm, was dressed in a white organdy shirtwaist dress and a small ring headdress, which the groom confiscated right after the receiving line broke up. Peter, as best man, had a difficult, tiring drive from Princeton, where he was training for the Olympics in rowing. His fatigue was evident when he dropped the ring box, providing us with a photograph of a delightful moment of family humor. Wedding cake and champagne were served under the huge tree next to the swimming pool.

My brother and his wife and son commented on the beautiful wedding. John had always been his favorite, he told me once. I pointed out to him it was probably because J.H. had been named after him, J. Henry. Later, I felt that J.H. never questioned him if he gave a command, which he did at times. They enjoyed each other's humor. To this day, J.H. is very diplomatic and careful in conversation—when he isn't joking, which he seems to be most of the time at home. However, my brother and sister-in-law both admired the boys and remarked about their different ways in which they helped me after their father's death.

One of my first memories of Sally is when my husband and I drove to Pittsburgh in May 1957 to meet her again (we had met her briefly once before) and her mother. She was a pretty girl, only 4' 11" tall, and weighing just under a hundred pounds. I remarked: "How small you are." Her mother, who was about Sally's height, replied, "But the Boses are so tall." All the men in my family were very tall, six feet and over: brothers, husband, and sons. Wini was 5' 11" in junior high. I am 5' 5½" myself, so I only feel small when I am with my family.

Sally is a professional painter and, small as she is physically, I have seen her dig out cement between old stones in the cellar wall of the old mansion they own, chip stones for mosaic work, up on a ladder spraying paint on the

decorative corners of a high ceiling, and playing cards, all with great determination and great force. Because she was an only daughter, she has been pampered in many ways, yet she grew up to be very self-reliant and almost too independent. Several years ago, being a true, new-era woman, she adamantly insisted that her painting came first in her life, then her husband. I argued that at times each is first, but each would be lost without the other. Who better than an artist could have been an understanding wife to my theater son! Both understand the odd hours demanded by the other's profession. After a nearly fatal automobile accident in 1972, this notation was found in Sally's shoulder bag. It had to do with her paintings to be exhibited in Peoria:

In moving into what many consider a new society, we must not obliterate, condemn, forget, destroy those high achievements and qualities of humanity that have brought us thus far. Let us not allow Beethoven and Matisse, Napoleon and Michelangelo to become a past romantic fad comparable to hula hoop and Twigg. Let us build on with those heights of man's possibilities, powers and progress—the future prerequisites of the human race.

It seems to me Sally's attitude toward her husband, and to all of us, has been more reflectively thoughtful since the accident. She is able to paint again, but I choke up a bit when I receive a letter written by a hand that still does not have complete control and am deeply touched by a heart and a will that determinedly continues to write. It will take time to recover completely from the skull fracture.

John, now forty, still calls me when he is "up" or "down" and to keep me informed of his family's activities. He has a very successful and satisfying career and is now a theater consultant, a director of field services for the Foundation for the Extension and Development of the American Professional Theater (FEDAPT). FEDAPT is a not-for-profit service established in 1968 by Actors' Equity Association to provide consultation and guidance for any professional theater project in the United States. Its primary objective is to supply professional expertise in all phases of theater management to both emergent and existing theater projects with the goal of strengthening administrative capability and efficiency.

We were very happy when John had to change from acting to a technical major. I have kept J.H.'s report cards, in case he ever becomes impatient with his own son, for the marks show he never worked up to his potential. His first-grade teacher wrote, "John does not do work equal to his capacity" at the end of his first semester, and "John did improve in reading" at the end of the second. But at the close of the school year, she remarked, "John has brought us many interesting ideas. He is quite creative." His second-grade teacher commented, "John Henry should have better marks than these." His adventuresome spirit began at an early age. In second grade, he saw the older children riding their bicycles to school, a distance of seventh-eighths of a mile, while he walked. One morning I had a call from the principal; John had pedalled his three wheeler to school. His fourth-grade teacher complained he was a daydreamer; that he looked out of the window instead of doing his work, but he worked when he worked. We figured he may have been fantasizing, but his mind wasn't exactly wandering when he did work. His imagination at play was greater than that of the other boys. He entertained Grampa by acting out Hansel and Gretel with his brothers. How proud Grampa and my husband were when mother and son were both in the cast of You Can't Take It With You, in which I played Penny and John played Ed.

His experience in theater work includes stage carpentry, set design, and he has been press agent, business manager, movie promoter, lighting director, and practically everything else. This has meant a very exciting life for all of us as we hear about his new challenges. John and Sally have lived in Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and now New York City. He has spent summers in Cohasset and Beverly, Massachusetts; Madison, Ohio; and Owings Mills, Maryland. Daughter-in-law Marsha wrote, when they moved into their loft at the top of a twelve-story warehouse in New York, "I don't envy the work ahead of them. They're such expert re-doers, though, that in no time, their loft will be lovely." It is—with its huge stained glass windows separating Sally's studio at one end, from the living quarters at the other end, and a greenhouse at the back elevator entrance. Their only child, Christopher, is small like his mother, curly-headed, adorable, bright, and all boy. He learns at first hand, and always has, that all children of any color or creed can play together. His second-grade class consists of Chinese, Italians, and Puerto Ricans. The PTA bulletins appear in Chinese, Italian, Spanish, and English. The family spend their summers at Singer Place, the old mansion, now consisting of five apartments, one of which they maintain for themselves. There Chris gets to play with his black friends.

Peter and Marsha were married April, 1961, in Annapolis at a beautiful formal wedding with ten attendants. For us, this was another family celebration, with Charles as best man and John and Wini in the wedding party. After a short honeymoon, Marsha was somewhat aghast at the humble, very hot apartment Peter had rented in Saratoga, New York—the only one he could find! Peter was attending nuclear power school at the time. During the next seven years, they moved around a great deal. Marsha never complained about being alone when Peter was at sea. Though a little taller than Sally, Marsha at 5' 2" always seems more petite to me. She works quickly and calmly, always speaks cheerfully to their children, Shannon, Dana, and John, but when necessary lays down the law. She is a cool, collected, thoughtful, capable hostess. Pete and Marsha are planners in detail. When I visit them, on occasion, a program for excursions, cocktails, tea, or coffee at home are carried out to the letter, with the children included wherever possible so that Grandmother is able to renew her acquaintance with them. (As a guest of John and Sally, on the other hand, we play it by ear, spending delightful hours at games.) Marsha is the only adult member in our family who does not really care for games like Hearts, Scrabble, Rummy, Tripoli, or Spite and Malice. However, she joins in on the rare occasions we are able to be together. She, like all my in-laws, is an avid reader; she particularly likes mystery stories as relaxation.

Peter went to submarine school after graduation and served on a nuclear submarine. He was always an excellent student and—quite a surprise to me!—was one of the six finalists in the Ohio Rhodes scholarship competition, although he did not receive it. He was very tense the day of the test, as he had often been before a final crew race. When he was in nursery school, his teacher told me he had such “stick-to-itiveness” that he would not even stop gluing paper links for a chain. When practicing piano lessons, he insisted on playing the difficult parts over and over again. He is always affectionate; in those nursery school days, he had to place his resting rug away from the others so that he could not reach out affectionately to touch the little girls near him. He hugs all of us tightly, yet speaks almost sharply at times. Like his father, he never abides small talk, such as derogatory comments after a party. Like his grandfather, he has a terrific memory. Both at the Naval Academy and at Harvard Business School, I was told, he was never too busy to share his knowledge with those who needed it.

After seven years in the Navy, Peter spent two years at Harvard earning his M.B.A. With his Navy engineering background and business education, he joined McKinsey and Company, management consultants, in Washington, D.C. McKinsey, with a branch in Amsterdam, sent him to Holland for two years. There he did an efficiency study at Stork Brothers and Company, Hengelo, the same company for which his Dutch grandfather had worked many years before! He was taken through the modernized apprentice school that Gradus.Elferink had attended. Coincidence? Yes! Still more, almost unbelievable, Peter's son John was born in Haarlem, my birthplace. In Holland, Peter heard praises of his grandfather: "Your grandfather was an outstanding person; if he had stayed here he would undoubtedly have become a member of Parliament, probably with the Socialist-Democratic Party." Peter has now become a partner in Resource Planning Associates, energy and environmental policy consultants, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Charles, the youngest and tallest son at 6' 6", married an Oberlin classmate, Marilyn Whitney, while still in their senior year. Their February, 1962, wedding is most memorable because of the weather. The trees with their frozen branches made Columbus, Ohio look like a fairyland. There was no electricity in the home of the bride on the evening before the wedding, and, for me, a horrendous drive from Mentor to Columbus on a slippery, narrow, one-lane section of the highway with my brother at the wheel and my sister-in-law nervously cautioning him "Don't pass," and "Be careful!" There was an intimate group at the church and a dinner at the Ohio State Faculty Club, where Marilyn's father teaches. Best man John clicked the camera every few minutes, and I was mother of the groom for the third time. I learned, when I met the bride's relatives, that Marilyn's grandparents, her parents, and several aunts and uncles had all graduated from Oberlin. They had a splendid time reminiscing. I remember my brother saying, jokingly, for everyone to hear, "Wouldn't you think they'd talk about some other college for a change?"

Since Chuck and Marilyn were married during the school year, there was no time for a honeymoon—nor money, for that matter. Marilyn's parents gave them a Volkswagen, and we joked about their taking the VW and my camping equipment on a honeymoon later. Several years later with their two little girls, Margot and Karla, they did take a six-week camping trip in the Northwest to Oregon and Washington.

Upon graduation, Chuck worked for the Naval Ordnance Laboratory at Silver Spring, Maryland, writing technical booklets with directions for different types of equipment. On one occasion, he was assigned to write directions for a machine on the Nautilus, on which his brother Peter was serving as Ordnance and Maintenance Officer.

At one point in high school, Chuck was interested in studying journalism. He writes well, expressing himself clearly and concisely. Like his brother John, he is also very handy with tools, and learned a great deal about car repairs when we bought an old Hudson for him during his junior year in high school. The work at Naval Ordnance Laboratories did not seem to challenge him enough. After three years, at only twenty-five years of age, he decided to work in an auto repair shop. Leaving a job with security took courage, particularly since Margot was three-and-a-half and Karla, one-and-a-half. Marilyn, however, decided to teach to make sure they could manage financially. True to her promise, she worked only long enough for Chuck to get a foothold in an automobile repair business. Grampa always remarked that the only way for a working man to advance financially was in his own business. After several years of hard work and long hours, Chuck and a partner have a tremendous German car repair garage called Motorhaus, Inc. in Vienna, Virginia.

When their third daughter, Lisa, was three, Marilyn returned to teaching. Margot is the first grandchild on both sides. The emotions one feels in becoming a grandmother for the first time are as difficult to describe as the emotions one has at the birth of one's own child. "It is the Miracle of Christmas," Father always said, "at whatever time of the year a child is born." To be living only twenty miles from Charles, Marilyn, and their three girls gives me the pleasure and comfort of immediate family near me, and an opportunity to see at least three grandchildren growing up.

Marilyn and Chuck bought a fifteen-room brick house in Leesburg, Virginia, the main part of which was built in 1830. In addition to their professions, they spend most of their free moments rebuilding, reinforcing, and repairing the house. This is their relaxation and enjoyment, and they do not have time, nor do they care for, an elaborate social life. The girls are very mother-oriented because Chuck has never been able to be home at dinner time, which in my estimation is the most important time for family togetherness. However, Daddy never seems too tired for some good-natured jostling when he gets home.

One cannot anticipate the work and responsibility that are required in owning a business. Busy as they are, however, Marilyn and Chuck are the first to lend a helping hand to me or to anyone. When John and Sally had their almost fatal accident at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, Chuck was at the scene within three hours. Neighbors speak highly of both of them. The minister of my church once said in a sermon, "Even before the mother of my VW repair man was in the congregation, I knew I could trust him." Often I hear people saying "What a fine person," and "How good his work is!" Marilyn is an excellent elementary school teacher and is just now teaching the gifted in Loudoun County. I know that those gifted children have a gifted teacher!

Daughter Winifred Jo was chosen as the first American Field Service student to spend a school year abroad from the Mentor school system. She left in August, 1962, to spend her senior year in beautiful Solothurn, Switzerland. Many AFS students have great difficulty living away from home and adjusting to another country's culture. Wini had some problems, but particularly enjoyed having a father; "Vatti," as he was called. Unfortunately, I suffered a heart attack in October, just two months after she left. I was hospitalized for six weeks, and did not return to teaching until February. I have always felt it was caused by tension. I was living alone for the first time in thirty years—in fact, for the first time in my life. I threw myself into teaching, and took part in a play, Sailor, Beware. I had always led a busy life and I may have overdone it, but it was sad for Wini not to know exactly what my condition was. I was still not strong when she returned in April. I was careful for a year and a half, and now I can never walk fast without becoming winded and experiencing some chest pain.

While Wini was in Switzerland, she became interested in my alma mater, the University of Rochester. She is very much the organizer, as I am. She had to work for her grades, as I did, and was poor in math, as I was! In her third year at Rochester, she fell in love with Terry Ganshaw, a very sensitive young man, who surprisingly has many of the same qualities that my husband had, for he, too, is sentimental, considerate, and a perfectionist, who works slowly but steadily, works late in the night, and is rather reserved. They have always lived many miles from me and now, with their eighth wedding anniversary almost here, I feel I should like to know Terry better. He appreciates little things that I do and, I feel, respects me highly.

Upon her graduation from college in June, 1967, Wini and I "had a ball" preparing for her wedding. She shopped around for dresses, and then drove me to a bridal shop to approve of her choice. Fortunately I loved the same dress she did. Looking at the gorgeous train, I remarked, "You know, Wini, I can visualize that on a child's bed some day." (I meant as a canopy over a child's bed.) "Do you always have to be so practical?" she complained. In 1971, Wini very cautiously cut into the train to make a skirt for her first daughter's bassinet.

The wedding! Wini and Terry used the same solos and ceremony as her father and I had used. Additions, however, were made and it was performed by a Methodist minister in the Mentor Methodist Church she had attended as a child. The reception was held at the Unitarian Church, which I joined after my husband's death. Brothers John, Pete, and Chuck and their families all did a great deal to make the wedding a perfect occasion. When John brought her to the altar, he answered the same question my father had so many years ago, "Who bringeth this woman in joy and confidence to this man?" "Her mother and brothers," was the answer, and with that, he surprised us all, by lifting up her veil and kissing her. Charles took pictures and pictures. Peter and Marsha greeted the guests as they arrived at my Unitarian Church, the converted Greystone Manor, where the reception luncheon was held. Marilyn took charge of her daughter, Margot, the flower girl.

Instead of a traditional rehearsal dinner, the groom's parents from Wilson, New York (near Niagara Falls), had a steak roast on the grounds of Greystone Manor, so that at the reception we enjoyed a truly family affair. My brother, Henk, had died that year, but three of his children drove miles to attend. My sister-in-law was on a cruise at the time. That evening in my living room, after a picnic supper in the backyard for about thirty-five very intimate friends, I lay back relaxed in a lounge chair and my grown-up children pretended to kneel before me, saying it was a job well done! After six years in the Navy, Terry is now studying for his Ph.D. in counselor education, specifically for college student personnel work at the University of Iowa. They have two daughters, Heidi and Gretchen.

Wini graduated from college in June, 1967, and, at sixty-three years of age, I retired from fourteen years of teaching. "What was I going to do?" my

friends asked. I wanted to do a little theater work, for since my heart attack I had not dared to do anything strenuous along with full-time teaching. I found, however, that two of the theater groups I had helped organize were falling by the wayside. Lake Erie College Community Theater in Painesville, Ohio, of which I was a charter member, was building a new theater, so temporarily there were no productions. Now I had time, but no place to take part! Friends my age, who had not been working, rarely included me in their bridge groups or social activities, not because they weren't good friends, but because they didn't realize my need. My days were empty! When I first taught, my neighbors were raising their children. Now they had gone back to work. It also became increasingly difficult to get boys to do yardwork.

In October, 1969, I wrote the children, in quadruplicate as I always did, that I thought it best to sell the house and that, since Charles and Marilyn had bought a house, lending stability to their lives, I felt it might be a good idea to move to Virginia. The boys immediately had a conference on my proposed plans. They were afraid I would miss my friends of twenty-seven years and lose my independent spirit and abilities by becoming too dependent on them.

Probably with the feelings typical of the newly retired widow whose children have all left the old home for new lives of their own, I felt happy that they were concerned, but hurt also, feeling that I wasn't wanted too near. However, they were truthful in emphasizing in advance that they could not spend a great deal of time with me. I knew there was a lively Unitarian Church near Chuck's home and felt I could, through that church, make a new life for myself. The Unitarian minister introduced me to Reston, Virginia, a planned community. I was fortunate in being able to rent a furnished apartment for three months on a trial basis. During that time I was able to get into a bridge class, take bowling lessons, and even try out for a play. I enjoyed Fairfax Unitarian Church and became interested in their lively Playreading Group, and now belong to it. Many of the acquaintances I made in those three months have now become very good friends. The experiment was successful in that I felt I could carry on independently in Reston. Rudolph (Rudy) Nemser, minister of the Fairfax church, wrote me, as I was returning to Mentor to sell my house, these encouraging words:

Just a line to say So Long! and that we will be looking forward to your return. Your departure, however, leaves a real gap. It says a lot about you that in just the few months you were here you made a real place for yourself within the church...and in Reston. Congratulations!"

I returned to Mentor and after several months sold the family home. Each of the children came to select some of the things I could not place in an apartment and help me make the move. I knew exactly which apartment I wanted and now live in a large two-bedroom apartment in a twelve-apartment building. With only seven steps up, I enter my lovely apartment with its unusually beautiful view of woods, pond, and golf course. The view, with its trees in winter or summer, would have inspired my father to write a jingle. "It is good so," he would have said.

I left our Stockbridge home without tears, for it had served its purpose well. Now, after five years, correspondence with good friends and neighbors has dropped off. Life is too busy for most of us. My husband would have been very happy that I live not only comfortably, but actually rather luxuriously. He would recognize many pieces of furniture we bought together: the coffee table with smaller table nested beneath it; the plant table he refinished; the colorful Gouda vase, a wedding present made into a lamp, all in the living room; two large antique Delft vases from his parents' home in my dining room: the green koffie, thee and zuiker (coffee, tea and sugar) canisters, also a wedding gift, in the kitchen; and the furniture in both bedrooms. Only a few articles are antiques: all are memorabilia to me. And most meaningful of all are the family pictures above my desk in my bedroom.

My husband would have been happy to know that I have been able to continue my theater activities now that I am retired. Several years ago, when I prepared a list of the roles I have played, my daughter pointed out that I had been in only one play during 1937-1947, the ten years in which my four children were young. Looking through my scrapbooks, I realize the physically taxing pace of my life as wife, mother, teacher, civic participant, and community-theater actress. I started acting at age thirteen with the Dutch Dramatic Club, Rochester, New York, taking part in approximately twenty-five plays in the Dutch language. Perhaps my grandchildren will enjoy reading the list of plays in which their grandmother has had a part.

Year	Title of Play	Location	Role
1924	The Devil's Disciple (Shaw)	Rochester, N.Y.	Mrs. Dudgeon
1927	Meet the Wife (Lynn Starling)	Rochester, N.Y.	Maid
1928	Mrs. Bumpstead Leigh	Rochester, N.Y.	Mrs. DeSalle
1937	A Bill of Divorcement (Clarence Dane)	Rochester, N.Y.	Bassett
	He Ain't Done Right by Nell (Wilbur Braun) one-act	Rochester, N.Y.	Granny Perkins
1947	Snafu (Solomon and Buchman)	Mentor, Ohio	Aunt Emily
	Blithe Spirit (Noel Coward)	Painesville, Ohio	Mrs. Bradman
1948	Happy Journey (Wilder)	Mentor, Ohio	Mother
1951	You Can't Take It with You (Kaufman and Hart)	Mentor, Ohio	Penny
1953	Kind Lady (Edward Chodorov)	Painesville, Ohio	Mrs. Edwards
1954	Bell, Book and Candle (John Van Druten)	Mentor, Ohio	Queenie
	Goodbye, My Fancy (Fay Kanin)	Mentor, Ohio	Professor Birdesh
1955	Trifles (Susan Glaspell) one-act	Painesville, Ohio	Mrs. Hale
1957	The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker (Liam O'Brien)	Painesville, Ohio	Aunt Jane
1958	Ladies of the Jury (Fred Ballard)	Mentor, Ohio	Mrs. Crane
1960	The Curious Savage (John Patrick)	Mentor, Ohio	Mrs. Savage
1962	Suds in Your Eye (Jack Kirkland)	Mentor, Ohio	Mrs. Rasmussen
	Sailor, Beware (Philip King and Falkland Cary)	Mentor, Ohio	Edie Hornett
1965	Point of Departure (Jean Anouilh)	Painesville, Ohio	Mother
	The Case of Mankind Against Eve	Mentor, Ohio	Eve III
	Yerma (Lorca)	Painesville, Ohio	Pagan Crone
1966	The Stronger (Strindberg)	Painesville, Ohio	Mrs. X
1968	Night Must Fall (Emlym Williams)	Shaker Heights, Ohio	Mrs. Terence
	Trifles (Susan Glaspell) one-act	Shaker Heights, Ohio	Mrs. Peters
1969	Barefoot in the Park (Neil Simon)	Willoughby, Ohio	Mrs. Banks
	Blithe Spirit (Noel Coward)	Willowick, Ohio	Madame Arcati
	The Man (Mel Dinelli)	Mentor, Ohio	Mrs. Gillis
1971	Bell, Book and Candle (John Van Druten)	Reston, Virginia	Queenie
	Maid to Marry (Ionesco)	Reston, Virginia	The Lady
	Everything in the Garden (Edward Albee)	Oakton, Virginia	Mrs. Toothe
1972	Please, No Flowers (Joel Ensana) one-act	Oakton, Virginia	Lena Grossman
	The Absence of a Cello (Ira Wallach)	Vienna, Virginia	Emma
1973	Out at Sea (Slawgmer Mrozek) one-act	Oakton, Virginia	"Thin"
	Bell, Book and Candle (John Van Druten)	Oakton, Virginia	Queenie
1974	A Gown for His Mistress (Georges Feydeau)	Vienna, Virginia	Md. Aigreville
	Night Must Fall (Emlym Williams)	Reston, Virginia	Mrs. Terence
1975	Pfeiffer's People	Oakton, Virginia	Several parts
	Thurber's Carnival	Reston, Virginia	First women, etc
	A Majority of One (Leonard Spigelgass)	Great Falls, Virginia	Mrs. Rubin
1976	Middle of the Night (Paddy Chayefsky)	Reston, Virginia	Evelyn
	<i>the Mousetrap (Agatha Christie)</i>	<i>Sterling Va</i>	<i>Mrs. Boyle</i>
	<i>Patterns (original by Diane Pety)</i>	<i>Reston Va</i>	<i>Shelma</i>



Bos Family 1974

My husband would have rejoiced, when in honor of my seventieth birthday last year (1974), the children planned a surprise week at Ocean City, Maryland. They reserved three three-bedroom apartments. We had not all been together since Wini's wedding in 1967, because Wini and Terry were in Japan part of the time and Peter and Marsha were in Holland for two years. Some had not seen each other in five years. The older cousins looked forward to seeing the newer ones. We spent a hilarious, memorable week with nine adults and nine children—seven granddaughters and two grandsons. At last I have a family picture. How the tree has spread!

That the apple does not fall far from the tree may apply to character traits, but the apples from my tree are spread far enough for sure—in Massachusetts, New York, Iowa, and one close by in Leesburg, Virginia.

In my 1971 Christmas letter I said:

In our '55 New Year's letter I wrote: And so, we, John and I, continue helping our boys and little girl develop along the lines they seek, hoping that some day they will be worthy citizens of this wonderful world, when we look on the bright side, as we are apt to do, all of us, at the beginning of a new year. Each has made a life for himself and, as a sexagenarian I have too, but without the touch of the children, that is, the joy and love extended to me as each has time to give, life would not be as meaningful. The children are indeed 'worthy citizens.' To you, my friends, I may boast in my happiness.

Now at seventy-one, I am truly proud of my family, always happiest when we are together, and satisfied with their accomplishments. Occasionally I receive little gems of appreciation and understanding, such as that my daughter wrote in January, 1975:

When any of us ask you how did you do it with three children and me, five years later, we do wonder really! I think you had to work hard for everything you got and were prepared for work involved in being a mother, whereas few things have ever required me to work hard until now.

John wrote in May, 1973:

So I say this to you this year and hope you will forgive me all those past silent times. I know you forgive ... you do that all the time for a lot of people. You are one of the most forgiving people I know. ... Anyway I just want you to know that I think you've been a great Mother, but even better, a terrific person. We go too long without saying things that are on our minds ...

Peter wrote me in 1975 after he read the first draft of this history:

From hearing Grampa's extemporaneous speech at his eightieth birthday gathering, I'm convinced he would have been a key leader in Parliament.

Thinking about Dad, the comment to me by one of his fellow Painesville Rotarians, "Your dad is one of God's noblemen," is a description I have always felt was beautifully apt.

In addition to the discipline you've shown in writing the book, I can think of many adjectives for you, Mother—thoughtful, giving, resilient, hearty, and enthusiastic—and together they have given me an example of life that makes my own (and that of countless others you have impacted) an immeasurably happier one.

Chuck wrote in 1969:

Children don't just go out into the world to get educated, married, raise families, and work by happenstance. It is the result of what you might call a long investment by the parents, hard work, patience, and lots of love followed by years of maturing. And after that the returns begin to trickle in only very slowly . . . so be proud of our achievements, for they are the result of your work and love. But also be proud of our mistakes, for we have a much greater choice to either achieve or err than you did. You and Dad have in effect established your immortality through us.

Gradus Elferink and John Bos, so speak your grandchildren and children.

R E F L E C T I O N

When Mother told us she was writing a history of her father's life and our family, we knew it would be thoughtfully written and a valuable reference over time. But none of us was prepared for the background depth, completeness of research, and creativity of composition that Mother provided in pulling together the many source materials, all in the incredibly short time of six months.

In providing this family record, Mother strengthened our understanding of the past, and gave us an awareness of our legacy not previously possible. As we reflect on our lives today, it's clear how much this legacy counts.

Perhaps in devoting so much energy to the development of their children, it is the fate of parents that much of their creative talent lies unnoticed by these same children. Fortunately, at the time Mother wrote this anthology, we were experienced enough with our own families to recognize her effort for what it was—a remarkable contribution, in itself and to our lives and those of our children, born of a selfless love we cherish dearly.

John Henry Bos
Peter George Bos
Charles Anthony Bos
Winifred Jo (Bos) Ganshaw



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